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DECCAN HERALD
The Power of Good

Trump sets off for Egypt to mark Gaza deal

MoS for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh set to represent India at the peace summit in Sharm el-Sheikh

Karnataka cashew industry turns 100 amid mass closures

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BIHAR'S 101 FORMULA: NDA allies seal deal, Chirag Paswan gets 29; candidate list awaited

In a first, BJP & JD(U) to fight equal number of seats

AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The BJP and JD(U) will contest an equal number of seats in the upcoming Bihar Assembly elections, marking the first time that the JD(U) will not contest more seats than its ally. BJP's poll in-charge for the state, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, made the announcement late Sunday.

Pradhan said both the BJP and JD(U) will contest 101 seats each. Chirag Paswan's Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) will field candidates in 29 constituencies, while Jitan Ram Manjhi's Hindustani Awam Morcha and Upendra Kushwaha's Rashtriya Lok Samta Party will contest six seats each in the 243-member Assembly.

"Among the NDA allies, we have completed the seat-sharing arrangement in a cordial atmosphere. All workers and leaders of NDA parties have warmly welcomed it. Bihar is ready," Pradhan said.

While nominations for the first phase of elections began on October 10, the BJP and its NDA allies are yet to announce their candidates. A key meeting of the BJP's Central Election Committee continued late into Sunday evening. The seat distribution among NDA allies was finalised during the meeting, which was chaired by PM Narendra Modi. Sources said the tickets will be announced on Monday.

A considerable amount of back-and-forth took place between Chirag Paswan and the BJP leadership over seat allocation, sources said. Chirag's 100% strike rate in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, where his party won all five seats it contested, gave him bargaining power. "He had initially demanded 40 seats, but after several meetings, the number was settled at 29. His vote share will add to our tally," a senior BJP leader said.

Manjhi, who had earlier voiced displeasure over not being included in the NDA delegation that met the EC last week, expressed satisfaction with the seat distribution. "In Parliament, we were given one seat and we were happy then. Now, we have been allotted six seats, and we respect the leadership's decision," Manjhi said. He had said if his party were given fewer seats, it would opt out of the contest.

BJP sources said Manjhi agreed to the current arrangement after receiving a call from the PM. "He will seek some ministerial berths, but for now, six seats have been agreed upon," said a senior BJP leader.

Manjhi had earlier voiced displeasure over Chirag being given more prominence within the alliance. However, when asked on Sunday about the 29 seats allotted to LJP (Ram Vilas), he said, "Others can understand what they have received, but we are satisfied with our allotment and have no complaints."

Seat shares & shifting alliances: Bihar's electoral arc in numbers

SEATS CONTESTED (SEATS WON)

2000*
Samata Party: 120 **(34)**
BJP: 168 **(67)**

2005 Feb
JD(U): 138 **(55)**
BJP: 103 **(37)**

2005 Oct
JD(U): 139 **(88)**
BJP: 102 **(55)**

2010
JD(U): 141 **(115)**
BJP: 102 **(91)**

2015**
JD(U): 101 **(71)**
BJP 157 **(53)**

2020
JD(U): 115 **(43)** BJP: 110 **(74)**

2025
JD(U): **101** BJP: **101**

* **Undivided Bihar:** The Samata Party, led by Nitish Kumar and George Fernandes, fought in alliance with the BJP and later merged with the JD(U), though a faction continued to function under the same name

** Fought against each other

JITAN RAM MANJHI
Hindustani Awam Morcha chief

"What the high command decided, we have accepted. But by giving us just six seats, they have underestimated us. It may cost the NDA in elections.

Will end liquor prohibition if voted to power: Jan Suraaj

ABHAY KUMAR
PATNA

The Jan Suraaj, led by Prashant Kishor, reiterated on Sunday that lifting the ban on liquor in Bihar would be its first move if elected to power.

"The decision to enforce the prohibition in April 2016 by the Nitish Kumar government was an economic blunder that has caused the state exchequer a loss of Rs 28,000 crore annually," said party national president Uday Singh.

"We reiterate that prohibition will be lifted immediately after we are voted to power. The revenue loss of Rs 28,000 crore will then be retrieved and used in an optimum manner in providing quality education to all," said Singh, who is likely to release the second list of candidates on Monday.

Meanwhile, an FIR was lodged against Kishor for poll code violation. He was charged with addressing more press conferences than permitted and not following the election regulations at Raghopur.

I.N.D.I.A bloc seat-sharing decision soon

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The seat-sharing negotiations in the I.N.D.I.A bloc for the Bihar Assembly elections appeared to be nearing completion, with top RJD leaders Lalu Prasad and Tejashwi Yadav, who reached here for a court hearing, likely to meet Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge and leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday.

Vikasheel Insaan Party chief Mukesh Sahani is also likely to meet Rahul on Monday, sources said. Before leaving for Delhi, Sahani said in Patna that it is true that there is some trouble in the Opposition bloc and he is leaving for the capital city as "all doctors who can cure it" are there.

The I.N.D.I.A bloc is expected to wrap up the negotiations by October 15, two days before the last date for the filing of nominations for the first phase of Assembly elections on November 6.

This week is also likely to see the multi-party Opposition alliance unveil a joint manifesto after releasing promises targeting Extremely Backward Classes (EBCs) and women.

Lalu, his wife Rabri Devi, and Tejashwi flew to Delhi on Sunday along with senior Congress leader Akhilesh Prasad Singh to appear before a court for the framing of charges in a CBI case related to the alleged land-for-jobs scam during the UPA regime.

BIHAR VOTES

Tejashwi said on X that the hearing had been pending for months and had come just before the elections.

Sources said Tejashwi is likely to meet Kharge and Rahul on Monday to find a way to remove irritants, including the Congress' reluctance to announce the former as the coalition's CM face and the deadlock over seat-sharing.

Rahul Gandhi with RJD's Tejashwi Yadav. PTI FILE

The RJD is offering 52-55 seats to the Congress, which is insisting that it will contest at least 60 seats.

The Congress believes the bloc should wait to declare the CM face as the alliance should be mindful of an adverse court ruling. However, the RJD wants to put a seal on the issue and pressure the Congress by not giving a green signal on the final number of seats.

Railways to deploy 1,000 coaches to ferry central forces

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Indian Railways has kept about 1,000 coaches ready for the movement of about 1 lakh personnel of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) to be deployed during the ensuing Bihar Assembly polls.

With the majority of the paramilitary forces coming from Jammu and Kashmir and the Northeast, there will be about 70 to 80 train services with 18 coaches each pressed into service for the deployment across the state, sources in the railways said.

Equipped with a pantry car, the 18-coach train will have a composition of AC and non-AC sleeper facilities.

The IRCTC will provide catering service to the forces on the train during their journey.

The Union Home Ministry has ordered a deployment of 1,000 companies of the CAPF to Bihar. The state government reportedly sought that 1,800 CAPF companies be deployed to maintain law and order and ensure peaceful voting across the state's 243 constituencies.

MoS Singh to represent Modi at Gaza peace summit in Egypt

NEW DELHI, PTI: Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh will represent Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a peace summit in Egypt's Red Sea resort city of Sharm el-Sheikh on Monday.

The Prime Minister was invited for the summit that is expected to be attended by US President Donald Trump and nearly 20 other world leaders.

New Delhi has deputed Singh to attend it as a special representative of the Prime Minister.

"Arrived in the historic city of Cairo as special representative of Prime Minister @narendramodi to attend the Gaza Peace Summit at Sharm el-Sheikh," Singh said on 'X'.

The 'Sharm el-Sheikh Peace Summit', being hosted by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, will discuss ways to bring lasting peace to Gaza as well as to the wider Middle East. Al-Sisi and Trump will co-chair it.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, Italy's Giorgia Meloni, French President Emmanuel Macron, and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres are among the leaders attending the summit.

"The summit will be co-chaired by President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi and US President Donald Trump, with the participation of leaders from more than 20 countries," an Egyptian readout said.

"The summit aims to end the war in the Gaza Strip, enhance efforts to bring peace and stability to the Middle East, and usher in a new phase of regional security and stability," it said.

The summit is taking place days after the first phase of President Trump's Gaza peace plan came into effect.

The ceasefire in Gaza came into effect on Friday.

Thackeray cousins meet over lunch amid alliance buzz

MUMBAI, DHNS: The Thackeray cousins, Uddhav and Raj, and their families met over lunch on Sunday, a sign of increasing bonhomie among the once estranged families.

This is the sixth meeting in recent times between Uddhav, the chief of the Shiv Sena (UBT), and Raj, the MNS president. The meeting assumes importance amid speculation about the cousins allying for the upcoming local body polls.

The luncheon comes before Tuesday's meeting of Opposition parties with the Chief Electoral Officer of Maharashtra. The delegation would include NCP(SP) supremo Sharad Pawar, state Congress chief Harshavardhan Sapkal, and Uddhav. MNS head Raj, who is not formally a part of the Maha Vikas Aghadi, will also attend the meet.

High-stakes fight in Jubilee Hills

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

Battle lines have been drawn for the high-profile Jubilee Hills Assembly seat bypoll, scheduled for November 11. The election was necessitated following the death of the sitting MLA and BRS leader Maganti Gopinath.

This high-stakes contest is being closely watched as a key test of urban voter sentiment in Telangana, particularly within the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation region, which largely supported the BRS in the last Assembly elections.

Both the ruling Congress and the BJP view the Jubilee Hills bypoll as a crucial opportunity to consolidate their presence and influence in the state's urban constituencies.

The Congress has fielded Backward Class (BC) leader V Naveen Yadav, while the BRS has nominated Gopinath's widow Sunitha. The BJP is yet to finalise its candidate.

The bypoll also evokes interest for another reason: In a similar post-Assembly election contest, the Congress won the Secunderabad Cantonment bypoll — necessitated by the death of sitting MLA G Lasya Nanditha of the BRS in a road accident — in May 2024, wresting the seat from the BRS.

Interestingly, the BJP's T N Vamsha Tilak finished second in that election, while Lasya's sister Niveditha stood third. Sympathy did not help the BRS retain the seat, ending its decade-long hold over the constituency.

In Jubilee Hills, the BRS has already launched its campaign with Sunitha Maganti. Calling the bypoll a "golden chance to discipline the Congress", BRS working president K T Rama Rao recently urged voters to elect Sunitha, asserting that people across castes and communities continued to see party founder and his father K Chandrashekar Rao as their leader of choice.

In the 2023 Assembly elections, the Congress fielded former cricketer Md Azharuddin from this segment, who secured 35.03% of the votes but lost to Gopinath. Naveen Yadav, the current Congress nominee, contested the 2014 polls on an AIMIM ticket and polled 41,656 votes, losing by about 8,000. He contested as an independent in 2019 and secured 18,817 votes.

The segment has approximately 3.9 lakh voters, including nearly 1 lakh Muslim voters. Political watchers say whether the AIMIM fields a candidate could significantly influence the outcome. If the AIMIM stays out, the Congress may gain an advantage by consolidating Muslim votes.

Meanwhile, the BJP has formed a three-member committee to finalise its candidate. Jubilee Hills falls under the Secunderabad Lok Sabha constituency, represented by Union minister G Kishan Reddy, who significantly improved the BJP's vote share from this segment in the 2024 general elections compared to the previous Assembly polls.

Meanwhile, the Congress is banking on its governance record over the past 20 months, the BC candidate factor, and pro-incumbency advantage.

Urban Test

Jubilee Hills Assembly seat — It falls under the Secunderabad Lok Sabha constituency

NEIGHBOURHOODS
- Erragadda
- Borabanda
- Yousufguda
- Vengal Rao Nagar
- Rahamat Nagar
- Shaikpet

3,98,982 Total voters
2,07,382 Male
1,91,593 Female
25 Third gender

2023 results
Winner: Maganti Gopinath (BRS)
16,337 votes Winning margin
Runner-up: Mohammed Azharuddin (Congress)

Cong upset over Chidambaram's Op Blue Star remark

Leader says Indira Gandhi paid for 1984 Op with her life

NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Congress leadership is said to be "very upset" with senior MP P Chidambaram's remarks about Operation Blue Star — that it was a mistake and then prime minister Indira Gandhi paid for it with her life.

Chidambaram

Sources have said leaders must be careful while making statements that could embarrass the party.

Chidambaram was speaking at a discussion on journalist Harinder Baweja's book "They Will Shoot You, Madam" at the Khushwant Singh Literature Festival in Himachal Pradesh's Kasauli on Saturday when he said Operation Blue Star in June 1984, to oust extremists from the Golden Temple, was a "mistake".

The saffron party targeted the Congress over Chidambaram's remarks, with BJP national spokesperson R P Singh claiming that history must record the truth — that it was not a national necessity but a "political misadventure" by the ex-PM.

Blunders: BJP

Union minister Kiren Rijiju said, "Chidambaram admits the Congress blunders too late. After revealing that India could not respond to Pakistan terror attacks in Mumbai due to high pressure from the US and foreign powers, now he admits Operation Blue Star at the Golden Temple was also a mistake."

Chidambaram earlier claimed that India wanted to take military action against Pakistan for the 26/11 terror attacks, but was persuaded not to by the US.

The remarks prompted the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi to attack the Congress.

Congress sources said the top leadership and the rank-and-file were upset with such remarks, asking why this was happening repeatedly.

Party sources said senior leaders "who have got everything from the Congress" should be more careful while making statements that embarrassed the party. Sources said it could not become a habit for leaders.

IPS suicide: Stalemate over autopsy continues

CHANDIGARH, PTI: There was no breakthrough in the impasse over the autopsy of Haryana IPS officer Y Puran Kumar on Sunday, six days after he allegedly died by suicide, even as a 31-member committee formed to seek "justice" for the deceased officer's family gave a 48-hour ultimatum to remove state police chief Shatrujeet Kapur from his post.

The officer's family has refused to give its consent for a post-mortem examination and cremation of the body until its demands are addressed, though the Haryana government is making efforts to persuade Kumar's wife, IAS officer Amneet P Kumar, to agree.

In a related development, Chandigarh Police on Sunday sent a request letter to Amneet, urging her "to come forward for identification of the body for the conduct of the PME (post-mortem) at the earliest, which is essential for a speedy investigation".

Cong opts out of 'risky' RS seat, deepens rift with NC in J&K

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS

The uneasy alliance between the National Conference (NC) and Congress in Jammu and Kashmir hit another rough patch on Sunday after the latter announced that it would not contest the "risky" Rajya Sabha seat offered by its senior partner.

Following a four-and-a-half-hour marathon meeting in Srinagar, the Jammu & Kashmir Congress decided to opt out of the race for the fourth Rajya Sabha seat, which the NC had earmarked for it under the seat-sharing arrangement.

J&K Congress President Tariq Hamid Karra told reporters that after "threadbare discussions," party leaders concluded that contesting seat number four was not strategically viable.

"Our central leadership had sought a safer seat—either seat number 1 or 2. However, the National Conference offered us seat number 4, which is comparatively less safe. Given the circumstances, it was unanimously decided that we will not field a candidate for seat number 4 and will leave the decision to our alliance partners," Karra said.

He added that the party's position had been formally communicated to the NC leadership. The development underscores the increasing strain within the NC–Congress alliance, which has been struggling to maintain cohesion since its formation before Assembly elections last year.

The Congress high command, sources said, has also sought clarity from the J&K unit on its continued partnership with the NC amid growing dissatisfaction at the grassroots level. The alliance was seen as a tactical move to consolidate the anti-BJP vote in the Union Territory last year.

Trust deficit

However, fault lines have persisted ever since. Analysts say the latest standoff over the Rajya Sabha seat could widen the trust deficit between the two parties.

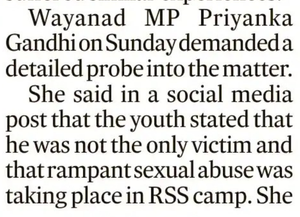
"This is more than a disagreement over one seat. It reflects the larger malaise in the NC–Congress understanding, which lacks clarity and mutual respect," a senior political observer said.

With the Congress refusing to take the offer and the NC yet to respond, the coalition faces another test of unity at a time when opposition cohesion is seen as crucial in countering the BJP's expanding influence in Jammu and Kashmir.

'Need revenue': Minister Suresh Gopi wants to step down, return to acting

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

Actor-turned-politician Suresh Gopi, known for his punchy one-liners both on screen and in public life, has stirred fresh curiosity with his latest remark.



Union Minister Suresh Gopi

On Sunday, the Union minister suggested that RSS leader Sadanandan Master, should be made a minister in his place. He added that his ministerial role had limited his ability to act in films, which in turn was affecting his income.

Speaking at a reception held for the RSS leader in Kannur, Gopi said that CPM leaders in the region were concerned about Master's RS elevation. According to Gopi, they feared it could pave the way for more BJP MLAs and MPs to be elected from Kannur, considered a CPM stronghold.

"I say this with sincerity: Sadanandan Master should be made a Union minister in my place. I believe it would mark a new chapter in Kerala's political history. Despite being the youngest BJP member, I was made a minister, perhaps because of the people's mandate that helped me become the first BJP Lok Sabha MP from Kerala," Gopi said.

He added that even before the election, he had expressed a desire to stay away from ministerial responsibilities and continue acting. "Acting brings me revenue, and I want to support my family and a few others with that income. But now, my revenue is affected."

Sources in the Malayalam film industry told *DH* that, as an actor at heart, Gopi seems concerned about not being able to focus on films since taking on the ministerial role. However, they said that his suggestion to replace himself with Sadanandan Master as Union minister may not necessarily be due to that concern alone.

Earlier, there were reports that the BJP leadership was initially hesitant to allow Gopi to resume acting after he was appointed Union Minister of State for Petroleum and Tourism. He later got nod to complete films he had already committed to. 'Janaki S v/s State of Kerala', which he acted in after becoming a minister, became embroiled in controversy over use of name 'Janaki' for title character.

Probe sexual assault in Kerala RSS camp: Priyanka

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS: The death of a youth by suicide in Thiruvananthapuram is causing much embarrassment for the RSS, as he claimed in a social media note that he had faced sexual abuse at an RSS camp since childhood and that many others had suffered similar experiences.

Wayanad MP Priyanka Gandhi on Sunday demanded a detailed probe into the matter.

She said in a social media post that the youth stated that he was not the only victim and that rampant sexual abuse was taking place in RSS camp. She urged RSS leadership to take immediate action.

Anandu Aji (24) was found dead on Thursday. He uploaded a social media post that was scheduled to appear after his death, in which he alleged repeated sexual assault at an RSS camp since childhood.

Violence at AAP's farmers rally in Gujarat; 3 cops injured

BOTAD (GUJARAT), PTI

Stones were hurled at police at a 'mahapanchayat' organised by AAP for farmers in Botad district on Sunday, prompting police to fire teargas shells, officials said, adding that at least three policemen were injured.

Police claimed no permission was taken for organising the rally in Haddad village in the evening.

"The 'mahapanchayat' was organised illegally. These people gathered in the village with the intention of causing damage to the market yard. When police asked them to disperse, they threw stones at us, which damaged a police vehicle," said superintendent of police Dharmendra Sharma.

He said police used force and lobbed teargas shells to disperse the mob.

A vehicle lies damaged after stones were hurled at police in Gujarat's Botad on Sunday. PTI

"Three policemen were injured and are currently undergoing treatment. Around 20 people have been detained, but the final count may rise as police are conducting combing operations", he said, adding that the situation is under control now.

The Aam Aadmi Party stated that farmers had gathered in large numbers to participate in the "kisan mahapanchayat" organised against alleged corruption at the local market yard.

The party claimed that Gujarat AAP president Isudan Gadhvi and others were detained before they could reach the venue.

Condemning the incident, AAP MLA Gopal Italia alleged that the police action was carried out at the behest of the BJP government.

AAP's farmer cell leader for Gujarat, Rajubhai Karpada, was addressing the rally when police arrived. A clash broke out between farmers and police, who fired tear gas shells, the party stated.

Bengaluru Monday, October 13, 2025 Pages 14 Vol 78 No 283 ₹7

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Alyssa's ton steals Smriti's thunder

Southpaw's fluent 80 in vain as Aussie skipper blasts 142 to dash India's hopes

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Oscar-winning actress Diane Keaton dead at 79

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Didi tells girl students to avoid going out at night after rape horror

ANIRBAN BHAUMIK
KOLKATA, DHNS

More than a day after a student of a private medical college was allegedly gang-raped in West Bengal, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday created a flutter when she advised female students to avoid going out of hostels at night.

Mamata Banerjee

The CM's comments triggered a fresh war of words between the ruling TMC and the Opposition BJP, which has been targeting the government citing the incident as the latest example of the lack of safety for women in the state.

Her remarks came even as the police caught three suspects in connection with the crime that occurred in Durgapur on Friday night.

▸ Mamata, Page 4

NCB seizes drugs worth Rs 50 cr at KIA

BENGALURU, DHNS: In a major drug bust, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) seized illicit drugs worth Rs 50 crore by arresting a Sri Lankan and two others at Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport (KIA).

The seized drugs include 45.4 kg of hydroponic ganja and 6 kg of psilocybin mushrooms. The operation was carried out on October 9, the NCB said on Sunday.

Details on Page 2

Scores killed as Pak-Afghan clashes escalate

Pak says 'serious provocation' came during Afghan minister's India visit

ISLAMABAD/KABUL, AGENCIES

Pakistan and Afghanistan said on Sunday they killed dozens of each other's troops during a night of heavy border clashes between the two countries.

The Pakistan military said that 23 of its soldiers were killed in the clashes. The Taliban said nine on its side were killed. Each side claimed it inflicted far higher casualties on the other side, without providing evidence. Pakistan said it had killed more than 200 Afghan Taliban and allied fighters, while Afghanistan said that it had killed 58 Pakistani soldiers.

Tensions have risen after Islamabad demanded the Taliban take action against the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) militants who have stepped up attacks in Pakistan, saying they operate from havens in Afghanistan. The Taliban, which came to power in 2021, denies that Pakistani militants are present on its soil.

The Pakistan army in a statement said that on the intervening night of October 11-12, Afghan Taliban and TTP "launched an unprovoked attack" on Pakistan.

Pakistani troops "repelled the assault decisively all along the border and inflicted heavy casualties on Taliban Forces and affiliated Khwarjis (TTP terrorists)," the statement said.

It noted that the "serious provocation" came during the visit of Afghanistan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi to India.

During the overnight skirmishes, 23 Pakistani soldiers died and 29 others were injured, while more than 200 Taliban personnel and affiliated terrorists were neutralised, the statement further said.

The Taliban-led Afghanistan government confirmed the attacks early Sunday, saying that its forces had conducted "retaliatory and successful operations".

"If the opposing side again violates Afghanistan's territorial integrity, our armed forces are fully prepared to defend the nation's borders," it said.

▸ Pak-Afghan, Page 4

TTP triggers clashes between neighbours

Pak offensive

- Airstrikes in Kabul on Thursday (Pak yet to officially confirm)
- Destroys Taliban tank position inside Afghanistan
- Strikes 2nd Battalion HQ of 1st Brigade of Afghan security forces in Barabcha
- Several Afghan military outposts destroyed/captured

Afghan action

- Taliban attacks Pak along Durand Line late on Saturday

Pak casualties this year (from Jan to Sept 15) from TTP attacks

500 plus | Include 311 troops | 73 cops

Latest trigger

- Repeated attacks by TTP in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa last week
- These attacks killed 11 military personnel, including a Lt Colonel and a Major

Taliban personnel arrive to patrol along a road in Khost province, near Pakistan border, on Sunday. AFP

Won't tolerate Pak aggression: Muttaqi

Afghanistan will resist any aggression by Pakistan and resolutely protect its sovereignty, Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi of the Taliban regime said in New Delhi on Sunday.

Details on Page10

Social media crimes up 21% in B'luru

9 months of 2025 see 953 cases; cops keeping close watch

DH EXCLUSIVE

SNEHA RAMESH
BENGALURU, DHNS

Crimes on social media, such as sending hate messages, threatening people and disturbing communal harmony, are on the rise, shows data accessed by *DH*.

In just nine months of 2025, police have booked 953 cases, a 51% increase compared to 2023 and a 21% increase compared to 2024, data shows. In 2025, police brought down over 300 such posts and blocked over 50 social media accounts.

Senior police officials said the department is keeping a close watch on social media posts that could disturb the society and are registering cases to rein in such behaviour.

"Our officials keep a close watch and even register suo motu cases against people who post content that could disturb the society. Immediate action is also taken against derogatory posts and posts that disturb communal harmony," M A Saleem, Director General and Inspector General of Police (DG&IGP), told *DH*.

Many of the victims are youngsters, a senior police officer said. "Many youngsters are under pressure to perform on social media. They want to get more likes, more followers and in the process interact with unknown people and get conned," the officer said.

The officer urged the younger generation to be cautious when it comes to social media.

▸ Social Media, Page 4

Year	No of cases
2023	629
2024	784
2025 (till Sept)	953

SOURCE: BENGALURU CITY POLICE

Defining social media crimes

A senior officer with the Central Crime Branch told DH that this is a "new concept and we don't have specific definitions in the book of law". "However, based on the act involved in the commission of crime, we use appropriate section related to abuse/threat/disturbance of peace/etc," the officer said.

BJP, JD(U) to contest 101 seats each in Bihar

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The BJP and the JD(U) will each contest on 101 seats in the Bihar Assembly elections, while Union minister Chirag Paswan-led LJP will field its candidates on 29 seats, Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan announced on Sunday.

Pradhan said all NDA partners have completed the seat-distribution exercise in a cordial manner.

Facing page

Priyank seeks RSS activities' ban on govt premises; CM responds

BENGALURU, DHNS

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has assured "necessary action" after Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR) Minister Priyank Kharge wrote him a letter seeking a ban on all RSS activities on government premises.

In the letter dated October 4, Priyank wrote: "An organisation named the RSS has been using government and aided schools and public government grounds for shakas, and, through sloganeering, has been developing thoughts in the minds of children and youths against the integrity of the country and the intentions of the Constitution."

Priyank Kharge

While the CM said he would look into the matter and immediately take "necessary action", the Opposition BJP flayed Priyank for the "irresponsible" move.

Their (RSS') aggressive demonstrations by holding lathis are having a deleterious impact on the minds of innocent children and youths, Priyank wrote in the letter.

▸ RSS, Page 4

Swamala Rojana
Sehat Ka Khajana!
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A video grab of Munirathna during his sit-in protest.

'Kari topi MLA': DKS, Munirathna lock horns

ASHWIN B M
BENGALURU, DHNS

Deputy CM DK Shivakumar's outreach programme at JP Park in Mathikere on Sunday was overshadowed by political drama after a heated exchange with local BJP MLA Munirathna.

The drama began when Shivakumar spotted the RR Nagar MLA sitting in the audience and referred to him as 'Hey 'kari topi' (black hat) MLA'. The situation escalated quickly as Munirathna, who was present in RSS attire, including a black hat, came onto the stage.

He tried to seize the mic from Shivakumar, who asked him to be seated. When Shivakumar finally relented and handed him the mic, Munirathna started lashing out.

He accused the DyCM of "deliberately insulting him" and complained that no photos of the local MP or MLA were in the banners. He called the government event a "Congress programme", claiming he had not been formally invited.

The event turned chaotic when political workers started shouting slogans, and the MLA's mic was turned off.

▸ Kari topi, Page 4
Related report, Page 3

Sri Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Govt. of Karnataka

Greater Bengaluru Authority
and
5 Bengaluru City Corporations

Sri D.K. Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister
Govt. of Karnataka

Dear Bengalureans,

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ONLINE at

https://KSCBCSelfDeclaration.karnataka.gov.in

Survey is aimed at welfare of everyone & your participation is solicited

Our Enumerators are also visiting HOUSE-TO-HOUSE for Survey & you can do it with them

Chief Commissioner
Greater Bengaluru Authority

Residents criticised the authorities for ignoring repeated complaints and allowing heavy machinery to operate in residential areas.

Five injured as crane collapses on houses in KR Puram

BENGALURU, DHNS: Five people were injured and two houses were damaged after a portion of a crane collapsed at a construction site in KR Puram, East Bengaluru, around 11.30 am on Sunday, police said.

The injured have been identified as Lulu, 30, Kurban, 19, Ilyas, 38, Sameer, 28, and Shyamdev, 52, all residents of Medahalli and daily wage workers.

Residents had reportedly objected to a private firm parking the crane in the area for repairs and had lodged complaints with the BBMP, but no action was taken, police said.

During the repairs, a section of the crane's beam and ladder snapped and fell onto the roofs of two houses. The impact caused the roofs to cave in, injuring the tenants inside. The victims were shifted to a private hospital and are said to be stable.

The Avalahalli police and BBMP officials inspected the spot and registered a case against the crane owner for negligence.

Angry residents blamed the authorities for allowing heavy machinery to be parked and operated in residential areas despite repeated complaints.

Rs 50-crore drug haul at KIA; Sri Lankan, 2 others arrested

Party drugs — hydro ganja, magic mushrooms — seized

BENGALURU, DHNS

In a major drug bust, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) seized narcotics worth Rs 50 crore and arrested a Sri Lankan national along with two others at the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA).

The seizure included 45.4 kg of hydroponic ganja and 6 kg of psilocybin mushrooms. The operation was carried out on October 9, the NCB said on Sunday.

"The NCB's Bengaluru Zonal Unit had been tracking drug cartels involved in trafficking hydroponic ganja from Thailand for some time. Based on intelligence inputs, officers intercepted two passengers arriving from Colombo and seized 31.4 kg of hydro ganja and 4 kg of psilocybin mushrooms," the agency said in a statement.

Known as 'magic mushrooms', psilocybin mushrooms cause euphoria, hallucinations, and sensory distortion.

Following the interrogation of the two suspects, the NCB intercepted their handler, a Sri Lankan national, who arrived on a later flight. Officers recovered an additional 14 kg of hydro ganja and 2 kg of psilocybin mushrooms from him.

"The drugs were meticulously concealed in around 250 food tins that were vacuum-sealed to evade detection," the NCB said, adding that investigations are underway to trace other members of the syndicate.

Officers examine the seized contraband at the Kempegowda International Airport. PHOTO CREDIT: NCB

Hydroponic ganja, the agency noted, has become an "elite party drug" because of its potent psychoactive effect and high demand. It can fetch up to Rs 80 lakh per kg in the retail market. Grown in controlled environments, it contains up to 25% tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), making it far more potent than locally grown ganja, which has about 5%, the agency said.

According to the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), traffickers often smuggle hydroponic ganja in tetra packs, chocolate bars, food containers, and sealed pouches to mask odour and avoid scanners at airports.

The agency added that traffickers often smuggle the contraband in tetra packs, chocolate bars, food containers, and sealed pouches to mask odour and avoid scanners at airports.

Routes typically involve transit through countries such as Dubai, Colombo or Kathmandu to avoid direct scrutiny on flights from Bangkok.

North City Corporation cleans up metro dust along ORR

BENGALURU, DHNS: Bengaluru North City Corporation conducted a midnight cleaning drive on Saturday along a 7.1-km stretch of the Outer Ring Road, from Ramamurthy Nagar bridge to Veerannapalya Junction.

The road was covered with dust and debris from ongoing metro construction.

The drive followed an inspection by Corporation Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar, who said that 75 auto-tippers, 16 tractors, two compactors, two jetting machines, four mechanical sweepers, and three JCBs were deployed for large-scale desilting and waste clearance.

Such was the state of the stretch that the corporation claimed to have removed 28 tonnes of silt using 16 tractors, 18 tonnes of garbage, and several tree branches; 11 bus stops were cleaned using jetting machines.

"About 375 pourakarmikas of Sarvagna Nagar division were part of the drive," the press note said.

Meanwhile, residents urged the corporation to consider white-topping service roads, even short stretches of 100 metres, at spots where potholes frequently appear.

Commuters face delays as technical snag hits Yellow Line

BENGALURU, DHNS: Metro trains on the Yellow Line were delayed for several hours on Sunday due to a technical glitch.

The delay lasted from 10.15 am and 1.58 pm.

Although Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) claimed that trains operated every 25 minutes during this time, passengers had a different story.

Ranjith Shetty, a commuter, said frequency at the Hongasandra metro station was 33 minutes, "totally contradicting" the BMRCL's claims.

The BMRCL operates four trains on the 19.15-km RV Road-Bommasandra line at a 19-minute interval during peak hours.

It plans to induct a fifth train, currently undergoing trial runs, in about a week's time. Frequency will then improve to 15 minutes.

MP seeks geological study for tunnel road project

Cites Uttarakhand tunnel collapse; calls Cong govt's plan a 'disaster'

BENGALURU, DHNS

Bangalore South MP LS Tejasvi Surya has demanded a geological impact assessment study by the Geological Survey of India (GSI) for the proposed 18-km Bengaluru tunnel road project.

The project, which will connect Silk Board Junction with Hebbal, involves using 5.89 acres of Lalbagh land for a parking facility.

The tunnel will pass beneath the historic Kempegowda Tower and the Peninsular Gneiss, a national geological monument that is believed to be about three billion years old.

It also includes commercial spaces and a rooftop garden above the tunnel, which will end with an exit near Ashoka Pillar.

On Sunday, Surya visited the Lalbagh Botanical Garden and questioned Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) officials about the project's environmental assessment.

A GSI representative confirmed that no consultations had been held.

GBA officials maintained that the project does not require an environmental assessment as it falls under the city development category. "All the trees in the marked area are about four years old. We will transplant them elsewhere," said a GBA official.

MP Tejasvi Surya interacts with GBA officials and park walkers during his visit to the Lalbagh Botanical Garden on Sunday morning. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

Speaking to reporters, Surya said, "The BMRCL also has a project here, but they are doing it without affecting the atmosphere. This tunnel project is a disaster."

Citing the Uttarakhand tunnel collapse, Surya said an Environmental Impact Assessment must be conducted before constructing tunnels, particularly near sites of national importance.

Responding to Congress' criticism that the BJP opposes development, he said genuine progress lies in fast-tracking metro lines, adding trains, and completing pending flyovers at Hosakerehalli and Ejipura.

While the MP insisted that GBA officials join him at the Peninsula Gneiss, they declined. Surya alleged that GBA officials were uncooperative due to "pressure" from the state government.

"Two years ago, I met Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar and requested him to drop the tunnel road plan, but they have not. I will put up a board in the park for people to voice their concerns," he said.

His office has also filed a public interest litigation (PIL) petition against the project.

Ravishankar, a daily visitor to Lalbagh, said, "They should look for an alternative. The tunnel road is not an option. It is a 300-billion-year-old stone. We do not know what lies beneath; what if the rock collapses? It is unnecessary and dangerous."

'Fill potholes first'

Several visitors urged the government to prioritise filling potholes and speeding up metro works instead.

"The tunnel project is only for people with cars in a city where the majority uses public transport. Basic assessments have not been done. Future generations will curse if this continues," said Satya Arikutharam, an urban mobility expert.

DK Shivakumar has assured that the project will not affect Lalbagh and no trees will be cut.

Parking row turns ugly; rowdy attacks shop owner in E-City

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 36-year-old history-sheeter was arrested for assaulting a milk shop owner and his wife following a quarrel over parking in Electronics City, police said on Sunday.

The arrested, Tarun Chaudhury, is a native of Bihar and is involved in real estate dealings in Bengaluru, the Hebbagodi police said.

Around 10 pm on October 9, Chaudhury allegedly drove up to the shop, owned by Gopal HV, 42, in Electronics City Phase II, in a black Range Rover accompanied by two bodyguards.

On arriving, he demanded to know who the shopkeeper was. Spotting Gopal, he asked his bodyguards for a cane and entered the shop, where he allegedly assaulted him. When Gopal's wife tried to intervene, she was attacked, too, the FIR stated.

"Chaudhury warned us that if we parked the milk van in front of the shop, he would shoot us or run us over with his car. He also beat us up using his footwear," Gopal said in his complaint.

A screengrab shows the suspect (in white) attacking the victim and his wife.

CCTV footage of the incident went viral on Sunday. It also showed Chaudhury kicking his bodyguards and punching one of them when they tried to restrain him.

Police have booked Chaudhury under BNS sections dealing with assault and outraging a woman's modesty. He has been remanded to judicial custody.

Student dies days after ingesting rat poison

BENGALURU, DHNS: A college student from Bengaluru, who had consumed rat poison, died at a hospital on Saturday, officials said.

Police said the deceased, 22-year-old Swarna, a MSc student at a city-based college, consumed rat poison last week at her hostel and boarded a bus to her native Chikkaballapur.

She was moved to the hospital in a semi-conscious state, where she succumbed after a week.

The High Grounds police have registered an Unnatural Death Report (UDR) and initiated a probe. Further probe is underway. Preliminary probe indicates that the girl was distressed over a recent family tragedy.

Man assaulted for protesting tree felling; three booked

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Jayanagar police have booked three people for allegedly attacking a man who objected to their felling of a tree near his house, officials said on Sunday.

The incident occurred on October 9 at 1.30 pm when the victim, Sathish Reddy, 49, was at his house in Jayanagar, 6th Block. He saw the suspects cutting a tall, strong tree near his home, the FIR noted.

Reddy stepped outside and questioned them and was allegedly abused by the suspects.

Then Ganesh, who was named accused 1, came to the spot, claimed to be an aide of BJP leader NR Ramesh, and, with his helmet, attacked Reddy and injured him. Reddy's son came to his rescue while the other two suspects, Chandra and Aiyappa, shoved them around.

Police have booked the trio under BNS sections 115 (voluntarily causing hurt), 118 (voluntarily causing hurt or grievous hurt by dangerous weapons or means), 351 (criminal intimidation), and 352 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace).

Counter FIR

Another FIR was also filed by the police the same day, where Ganesh alleged that two residents asked him to trim the tree, citing health issues caused by worms.

Ganesh claimed that he had informed the forest department to trim only the dangerous branches. He alleged that Reddy and his son objected to the pruning and assaulted him with a helmet and a cane.

Further probe is underway, police said.

RAIL WHEEL FACTORY
Yelahanka, Bangalore – 560064

TENDER NOTICE NO.RWF/S/ 1/011/2025-26 dt.10.10.25

On behalf of the President of India, Principal Chief Materials Manager invites electronic Tenders from Interested Vendors for supply of the following items on the Indian Railways E-Portal **www.ireps.gov.in**. The Tender documents and the Corrigenda to the Tenders, if any, will be available on the Portal only.

Sl	Tender No	D e date	Short Description	ty
1	P1251959	30/10/25	Ferro Manganese as per RWF Specification	928060 gs
2	P1251624A	03/11/25	Silica sand 45 AFS as per RWF Specification	3537 MT

TENDER NOTICE NO.RWF/S/1 6/2025-26/06 Dated: 08.10.2025

Tender No	RWFSTPT FA 3rdSlab 25-26
Due Date & Time	10.11.2025 at 14.15 Hrs
Scope of Work	Please refer RWF and IREPS website
Distance Slab	Above 1000 ms (with a mean distance of 2500 ms).
Quantity	18,630 MT
Estimated Tender Value	Rs.8,98,89,750.00
EMD Amount	Rs.5,99,500.00
Contract Period	Minimum 12 (Twelve) months from the date of issue of Letter of Acceptance

RINCI AL CHIEF MATERIALS MANAGER

INDIAN RAILWAYS
PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

Notification is hereby given to all users of Railway lines and premises situated on the completed section of the under noted sections of the South Western Railway of Mysuru division that 25,000 Volt 50 Hz, AC overhead traction is energized and shall be treated as live at all times and no unauthorized persons shall approach or work in proximity of the said overhead lines.

SN	Section	Date
1	Sakleshpur (SKLR) (Km Ch 42/000) - Subhramanya Road (SBHR) (Km Ch 98/000)	13.10.2025

INTRODUCTION OF 25 kV A.C TRACTION
WARNING TO ROAD USERS

It is notified for information of the public that in connection with introduction of 25 kV A.C Electric Traction over the following section of Mysuru division of South Western Railway, height gauges have been erected at all the level crossings with clear height of 4.78 meters above road level with a view to prevent loads of excessive heights from coming into contact or dangerous proximity of live traction wire (contact wire) which shall be at a height of minimum 5.5m above the Rail level at level crossings..

SN	Section	Date
1	Sakleshpur (SKLR) (Km Ch 42/000) - Subhramanya Road (SBHR) (Km Ch 98/000)	13.10.2025

Public are hereby notified to observe the height specified above for the purpose of loading vehicles and to see that loads carried on road vehicles do not infringe the height gauges under any circumstances. The dangers of a load of excessive height are as follows: -

1. Danger to the height gauge and consequent obstruction to the road as well as the Railway line.
2. Danger to the materials or equipment or the vehicles itself.
3. Danger of fire and risk of life due to contact with or dangerous proximity to the conductors.

Project In-Charge
RITES Limited

भारतीय् रेल
सार्वजनिक सूचना

दक्षिण पक्षिम रेलवे के मैसूरु डिवीजन के निम्नलिखित खंड पर स्थित रेलवे लाइनों और परिसर के सभी उपयोगकर्ताओं को अधिसूचना दी जाती है कि 25,000 वोल्ट 50 हर्ट्ज, एसी ओवरहेड ट्रैक्षन सक्रिय है और इसे हर समय चालू माना जाएगा। और कोई भी अनधिकृत व्यक्ति उक्त ओवरहेड लाइनों के करीब नहीं आएगा या काम नही करेगा।

संख्य	जोन	दिनांक
1	सकलेशपुर (SKLR) (Km Ch 42/000) - सुब्रमण्या रोड (SBHR) (Km Ch 98/000)	13.10.2025

25 केवी ए.सी ट्रैक्षन को चालू कराना
सड़क उपयोगकर्ताओं को चेतावनी

जनता की जानकारी के लिए यह अधिसूचित किया जाता है कि दक्षिण पश्चिम रेलवे के मैसूरु डिविजन के निम्नलिखित खंड पर 25 केवी ए.सी.इलेक्ट्रिक ट्रैक्षन की शुरुआत के संबंध में, अत्यधिक ऊंचाई वाले भार को लाइव ट्रैवशन तार के संपर्क मे आने खतरनाक निकटता से रोकने की दृष्टि से. । सड़क स्तर से 4.78 मीटर की स्पष्ट ऊंचाई के साथ सभी लेवल क्रॉसिंग पर ऊंचाई गेज लगाए गए हैं । यहा कान्टेक्ट तार लेवल क्रॉसिंग पर रेल स्तर से कम से कम 5.5 मीटर की ऊंचाई पर होगा ।

संख्य	जोन	दिनांक
1	सकलेशपुर (SKLR) (Km Ch 42/000) - सुब्रमण्या रोड (SBHR) (Km Ch 98/000)	13.10.2025

जनता को सूचित किया जाया है कि वे वाहनों को लोड करने के उद्देश्य से ऊपर निर्दिष्ट ऊंचाई का पालन करे और यह देखें कि सड़क वाहनों पर ले जाया गया भार किसी भी परिस्थिति में ऊंचाई गेज का उल्लंघन नहीं करता है । अत्यधिक ऊंचाई के भार के खतरे इस प्रकार हैं :-

1) ऊंचाई गेज को खतरा और परिणामस्वरुप सड़क के साथ रेलवे लाइन में भी रुकावट ।
2) सामग्री या उपकरण या वाहनों को ही खतरा ।
3) कंडक्टरों के संपर्क या खतरनाक निकटता के कारण आग का खतरा और जीवन का जोखिम । अत्यधिक ऊंचाई वाले भार को लाइव ट्रैवशन तार के संपर्क मे आने खतरनाक निकटता से रोकने की दृष्टि से, जो कान्टेक्ट तार

परियोजना प्रभारी
रइट्स लिमिडेड

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Documentary: 'Life and achievements of Reverend Ferdinand Kittel'; St Francis College; 1.30 pm.

CULTURAL

Sermon: 'Mahabharata Sabha Parva'; Chandrashekhar Acharya to attend; Raghavendra Swamy Mutt, Doddabommasandra, Vidyaranyapura; 6.15 pm.

Lecture: 'Ashvayuja Masada Vaibhava'; Sri Prasanna Anjaneya Swamy Bhakta Mandali Trust, Jayanagar; 6.30 pm.

Invites to be published in this column should be sent to: **incitytoday@deccanherald.co.in.** Please note that hard copies will not be accepted

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST

Generally cloudy sky with light rain

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	30.0°C
Minimum	21.0°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	--
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	71%
Sunset (Oct 13)	6:03 pm
Sunrise (Oct 14)	6:10 am
Moonrise	10:54 pm
Moonset	11:21 am

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

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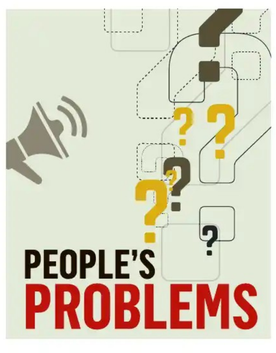


Need a hand? Write to us

Letters of grievances are pouring in and we are doing our best to accommodate as many as possible. Readers may write in to highlight civic problems affecting their locality and we will help address them in an interactive and effective manner.

Grievances and issues related to public utility agencies such as Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) and Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (Bescom) would be highlighted in the weekly column.

The writeups, which could be accompanied by photographs highlighting the problems, will be published on Mondays. Mail your grievances to: peoplesproblems @deccanherald.co.in

Byrasandra Park not open as promised

Despite the deputy chief minister's announcement that all parks would remain open from 5 am to 10 pm without any break, Byrasandra Park has not been following the new timings.

I request the authorities concerned to look into the matter.

Srikumar Kumar

Pub too close to college

This is to bring to your attention that Plan B bar and pub is located less than 100 metres from the main gate of St Joseph's College of Commerce on Brigade Road. An investigation is warranted as to why the police and other authorities concerned have not taken action against this violation.

Navin Prabhakar

Water wastage in premium trains

In premium trains such as the Shatabdi and Vande Bharat, one-litre water bottles are provided to all passengers. However, many passengers do not consume the entire bottle, leading to significant water wastage.

The Railways should consider supplying water in smaller quantities — say 250 ml or 300 ml bottles — to minimise wastage and help conserve every drop.

V Padmanabhan,
Rustam Bagh Main Road

Difficulty in accessing toilets at metro stations

I faced difficulty in accessing basic amenities, especially toilets, at major metro stations like Majestic.

Finding a toilet inside a metro station feels like solving a puzzle — there are no clear signs, and exiting the paid area makes it even harder. This becomes a major challenge for commuters, particularly in emergencies.

A few days ago, I needed to use the toilet but could not locate it due to the lack of signage.

When I exited the paid area and approached the counter for help, the staff refused to let me use the toilet even after I showed my ticket.

The system is especially inconvenient for women, children, and those who are uneducated or unfamiliar with the station layout.

The metro authorities must address this issue from a commuter's perspective and ensure that access to essential facilities like toilets strikes a balance between safety and necessity.

Vijayababu B,
KR Puram

Cabinet expansion likely in December: Yathindra

RAICHUR, DHNS: MLC and Chief Minister Siddaramiah's son Dr Yathindra Siddaramaiah on Sunday said that were chances of Cabinet expansion in the month of December.

Speaking to mediapersons here, Yathindra said, "There is demand to give ministerial berths to many seniors (party). Some have also expressed their opinion. Similarly, chief minister too has implicitly spoke about this."

"There is no chance of me becoming a minister. The chief minister has already clarified in this regard. Former Mysore-Kodagu MP Pratap Simha is an irrelevant politician. People from his own party don't listen to him. Why should we give any importance to his words?" he added.

Speaking on the 'Kari Topi' (black cap) remark by Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, Yathindra said that the former was in Bengaluru to know about problems related to road and others. "Muniratna was also in Congress before going to BJP. Shivakumar might have called Muniratna 'Kari Topi' out of familiarity. There is no need to make it an issue."

It's in Nov: Zameer

Terming 'November Kranti' a media creation, Housing Minister B Z Zameer Ahmed Khan said Siddaramaiah would continue as chief minister for full five-year term.

Speaking to reporters in Hubballi on Sunday, the minister said the Cabinet would be reshuffled in November, and there is a chance of giving ministerial berths to new faces. "Many leaders have a wish to become CM, but high command will take a final call on it. There is no infighting in the Congress party, it is there in the BJP," he alleged.

Replying to a query, he said no minister or MLA proposed to the CM to ban the RSS.

B'luru cops cancel 1,180 gun licences; most belong to the dead

Year-long clean-up drive undertaken by police

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

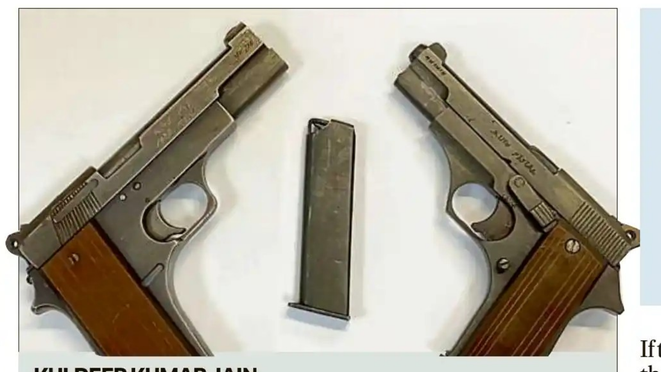
The Bengaluru Police has cancelled 946 arms licences due to the death of licence holders between August 2024 and August 2025.

The year-long "clean up" drive led to the cancellation of 1,180 gun licences across Bengaluru City, of which the biggest chunk (946) belonged to dead licensees. The drive was carried out to deal with existing grey areas among arms licence holders in the city.

Of the 946 cancelled licences, Bengaluru East saw the highest cancellation at 193, followed by 162 in the North division, 133 in South, 121 in West, 93 in Southeast, 88 in Central, 87 in Northeast, and 69 in Whitefield.

When the licensee passes away, the legal heir is required to immediately deposit the weapon either at the local police station or at a private armoury. "After that the legal heir can either get the licence cancelled or apply for a fresh licence and then get the weapon transferred to their licence," Kuldeep Kumar Jain, Joint Commissioner of Police (Administration), told *DH*.

The other reasons for the cancellations include non-renewal and failure to purchase a weapon. Once approved, an arms licence is valid for a duration of five years. "Before the five years are completed, the licensee is required to get the licence renewed. We recommend that they apply for a renewal about three months in advance to ensure it's done within the stipulated time and there is no lapse. If this is not done, the weapon immediately becomes illegal," the officer elaborated.



KULDEEP KUMAR JAIN
Joint Commissioner of Police (Administration)

"Before the five years are completed, the licensee is required to get the licence renewed. We recommend that they apply for a renewal about three months in advance to ensure it's done within the stipulated time and there is no lapse. If this is not done, the weapon immediately becomes illegal.

Failure to renew also comes with a penalty. "While there will be a small penalty when the licensee attempts to renew the license after the five-year period, it is not the only concern. Owning an illegal weapon comes with bigger repercussions," he added.

The entire process of applying for a fresh arms licence and renewing an existing one takes place online through the official website of the Bengaluru City Police. Each weapon purchased under the licence needs to be registered separately. On average, the city receives approximately 100 applications each month.

Once a licence is approved, the licensee is required to purchase a weapon within one year. "Or the person can get an extension of another year. If the person does not purchase the weapon within this period, we will send a formal notice, and the licence will then be cancelled. Overall, 15 licences were cancelled for this reason in the past year, and 219 cancelled for non-renewal.

Currently, 8,567 arms licences are operational within the city limits. "As a rule of thumb, most applications get rejected. The licences are approved only when the applicant proves that there is a threat to life or if the weapon holds sentimental value. Gun licences are also provided to businessmen who carry out huge transactions. Whatever the reason might be, a thorough background check is carried out," he added.

In numbers

8,567 Operational licences	1,180 Cancelled last year

Reason for cancellation

946 Death of licence-holder	15 Weapon not purchased

219 Non-renewal

RTI Act consistently eroded since 2014, says Shivakumar

Oct 12 marks 20th anniversary of landmark law

BENGALURU, DHNS:

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar stated on Sunday that the Right to Information Act (RTI Act) has been consistently eroded since 2014, "undermining the transparency and democratic set-up of the country."

In a press release, Shivakumar, who is also the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) president, stated that the 2019 amendments to the Act had "weakened" independence and "increased" executive influence.

"Earlier, 'personal information' could still be disclosed if it served public interest, but now the amended provision says: 'No information which relates to personal information shall be disclosed, effectively making 'personal information' an absolute exemption. This could prevent disclosure of even information linked to public duties or use of public funds, undermining the transparency principle of RTI," the press note said.

The press note came on the 20th anniversary of the RTI Act, which was enforced on October 12, 2005.

Stating that the Central Information Commission had only two commissioners in place against a sanctioned strength of 11, Shivakumar said the commission was functioning at its "weakest strength ever."

The note concluded with the Congress placing 6 demands, including restoring the "independence" of the the Information Commissions by undoing the 2019 amendments and ensuring fixed 5 year tenure with secure service conditions, immediately filling vacancies in Central and state commissions through a "transparent, time-bound process," and providing strong protection for RTI users and whistleblowers through full implementation of the Whistleblower Protection Act.

Ugrappa's 'subtle warning' to CM leaves SEC disappointed

KOPPAL, DHNS: State Election Commissioner (SEC) G S Sangreshi expressed his displeasure over former MP V S Ugrappa's subtle warning to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, saying "don't snatch food from our plates" during a government programme.

Speaking to reporters here on Sunday, Sangreshi said, "Both Ugrappa and Siddaramaiah have come up from lower strata of the society. Both are champions of social justice. Ugrappa should not have embarrassed Siddaramaiah with his statement. The CM is not limited to a community. Why would he snatch food from others' plates? Ugrappa should have raised the issue on the party forum. This is my opinion," said Sangreshi, who holds the constitutional post.

"The data provided by the ongoing socio-educational survey, conducted by the state backward classes commission, will help the government to formulate the welfare programmes for the communities," he said.

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) volunteers participate in a 'Path Sanchalan' programme to mark the organisation's centenary year, in Bengaluru on Sunday. PTI PHOTO

Citizens' group questions nod for RSS route marches

BENGALURU, DHNS

A citizens' group campaigning for people's right to protest questioned the police permission given to the RSS route marches across Bengaluru on Sunday.

As part of its centenary celebrations, the RSS conducted route marches at 100 locations in the city, with its uniformed workers walking through the designated routes.

Police personnel were also deployed to prevent untoward incidents during the marches.

Bengaluru Police Commissioner Seemanth Kamar Singh explained that the RSS route marches were conducted every year and that prior police permission had been taken.

Vinay K Sreenivasa, advocate and member of the Horatada Hakkigaagi Janandolana (Campaign for Right to Protest), asked how the police allowed RSS march when rallies and protests are permitted only at Freedom Park.

Police routinely deny permissions to different rallies, including the May Day Rally, he pointed out.

According to him, two types of regulations are in place governing public processions:

The Licensing and Regulation of Protests, Demonstrations and Protest Marches (Bengaluru City) Order, 2021, regulates protest marches. The Licensing and Controlling of Assemblies and Processions Order (Bangalore City) Order, 2009, regulates non-protest processions.

Protest marches are allowed under Section 3(ii) of the 2021 order but police don't allow them. Police now say they were intimated about the RSS march, he said.

"Was the RSS march a protest march or a procession? Under what order was it allowed—2021 order or the 2009 order? Whatever it is, if they have allowed marches, why isn't anyone else allowed? Secondly, how are lathis allowed in a public march? If someone else also asks for permission to march with lathis, will they allow? When we ask the government to revoke the order restricting protests to Freedom Park, they cite city traffic. Wasn't traffic affected by the RSS march?" he sought to know.

Forest dept reunites 3 leopard cubs with their mother

CHANNARAYAPATNA (HASSAN DIST), DHNS

Forest officials successfully reunited three leopard cubs with their mother in the taluk.

The leopardess had given birth to three cubs at a sugarcane field near Bediganahalli in the taluk. Farm workers who had come to harvest sugarcane found the cubs. DCF Saurabh Kumar, DRFO Shankar and ACF Khalander visited the spot and placed the cubs safely in a carton box, hoping that the mother leopard will return.

The mother returned at night and carried one cub. The remaining two were fed with milk by the department. The leopard did not return the next day. It came on the third night and took another cub, leaving behind the last cub in the box.

The department summoned the dog squad and tried to trace the mother. They used thermal drones to find the leopard with its two cubs.

Later, they placed the box at a place where the leopard was traced. Hearing the sound of the cub, the mother came to the spot and took away its third cub.

Just what the doctor ordered: Pharmacists know well rules on banned drugs' sale

AMULLYA SHIVASHANKAR
BENGALURU, DHNS:

Amid rising concerns over misuse of certain drugs, a reality check at pharmacies in Bengaluru showed that they were complying with rules of the drugs control department.

DH asked pharmacists for Amidopyrine tablets prescribed for fever and pain. But pharmacists in and around Residency Road did not have the drug and two of them told this reporter that it was banned and advised against using them.

In and around Shivajinagar, pharmacists were asked for Sibutramine and R-Sibutramine tablets used to treat obesity. It was banned for increasing chances of heart attack and stroke. This drug too was not available. A pharmacist on Jayamahal Road said, "Doctors will be behind bars if they prescribe them. We will be arrested if we sell them," highlighting the awareness among pharmacists. The government, in June 2025, banned use and sale of Pomol 650 tablets for not being of standard quality and many pharmacies did not have it. However, it was available online. Another banned drug Penicillin skin/eye ointment and Nialamide could not be procured in Ulsoor.

The ointment was banned for causing antibiotic resistance and severe allergic reaction and Nialamide was banned for its role in liver damage of its consumers.

MITQ Q7 syrup, banned for being below standards this year, was also not available.

Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao said, "We have sent 390 samples of cough syrup drugs for testing".

Shortage of drug inspectors remains thorny issue

DH had reported earlier this year that there was a shortage of drug inspectors in the state, with only eight officers and the situation had not improved.

Drug inspectors are responsible for monitoring drug manufacturing and conducting random inspections on pharmacies. Responding to a question on shortage of drug inspectors, Dinesh Gundu Rao told DH that the matter was pending in the Supreme Court and despite that the recruitment had been completed.

"If the Supreme Court rules in our favour, we will get about 90 new drug inspectors. All recruitments are done," he said.

SWR to run special trains for Deeepavali

▶ **BENGALURU, DHNS:** The South Western Railway (SWR) will run special trains between KSR Bengaluru and Chennai Central for the Deepavali festival.

Train number 06255 will leave KSR Bengaluru at 8.05 am on October 18, 21 and 25, and reach Chennai Central at 2.45 pm. Train number 06256 will leave Chennai Central at 4.30 pm on October 18, 21 and 25, and arrive at KSR Bengaluru at 10.45 pm.

Both trains will stop at Yeshwantpur, KR Puram, Bangarapet, Jolarpettai, Katpadi, Arakkonam, Tiruvallur and Perambur. The SWR released a press note in this regard.

Vendor accuses bizman of kidnap; 'civil dispute,' say police

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 47-year-old vegetable vendor has accused a businessman and his family of kidnapping and assaulting him over a financial disagreement.

The complainant, Sagai Raj, a resident of Koramangala, alleged that on February 12, while returning home on his bike, a gang of four men followed and attacked him. He claimed they tied a cloth over his face, took him to an apartment, injected him to make him unconscious, and burnt his private parts with a cigarette butt.

Raj further stated that the men were taking him towards Bellandur to abandon him, but he managed to escape and sought help from the traffic police, who alerted the Koramangala police.

In his complaint, Raj named businessman Anand Kumar and his family as the main accused, alleging that they had hired four Telugu-speaking men to carry out the abduction.

He claimed he had helped Kumar secure a loan of Rs 20 lakh to sell his house and support his daughters' education. When Kumar was unable to repay the amount, he allegedly orchestrated the kidnapping and warned Raj not to approach the police.

A senior police officer said, "Based on the complaint, a case was registered against Anand Kumar and his family. However, our investigation found no evidence to support the allegations. It appears to be a civil dispute, and we are preparing to file a 'B' report in the case."

BENGALURU WALK

Civic grievances to JP Park makeover, DyCM addresses North B'luru issues

ASHWIN B M
BENGALURU, DHNS

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar stepped out with the public on Sunday morning at JP Park, Mathikere, as part of the "Bengaluru Walk" programme, which covered the Bengaluru North Corporation where more than 500 citizens gathered to voice their grievances and suggestions for the city's development.

Shivakumar listened to the people's problems and received information on issues in the park as well. He questioned the authorities about the lack of infrastructure.

"I have witnessed the mismanagement in the garden and have even filmed it," he noted. "If you have any grievances or problems in the area, you can file a complaint using the helpline - 1533."

He mentioned that the city authorities would address issues such as garbage on Dr Rajkumar Road, the construction of an underpass near Manganapalya and problems near Gangamma Circle.

Earlier, rainwater used to flow into the lake in the garden. When a citizen complained that it no longer did, the DyCM said, "So the canal is closed. let's fix it."

He instructed the police inspector to install cameras to monitor the area and deploy police personnel in the park area to curb the activities of miscreants.

During his walking trail, the DyCM made a pit stop at the open gym and exercised a bit. He suggested the officials to build a proper shelter to the area, then proceeded towards the dysfunctional and abandoned swimming pool area and ordered to revamp it soon. He was surprised to meet his school classmate, Madhava Nayak, after 55 years. Reminiscing about their school days, he said: "I stood for school elections while studying at Carmel School, and he was my voting agent," the DyCM recalled.

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar notes down a grievance flagged by a senior citizen during his 'Walk with Bengaluru' programme in Mathikere on Sunday. PHOTO/DCMO

Shivakumar promised to reinstall Jayaprakash Narayan's statue in JP Park and announced plans to beautify the park, including the construction of a swimming pool, yoga hall, gym, revamping toy train and children's playground. He also instructed officials to resolve the issue of locked toilets within the next two days.

RTI activist Vincent Bernard complained that although 44 works had been sanctioned in JP Park, with 80% of the funds released, no work had been done. The DyCM responded by suggesting an investigation into the matter.

Citizens' concerns

- **Stray dogs control:** The area is infested with strays, and we are really scared to go out alone for a walk in the early mornings and evenings, a walker said.
- **Auto services:** Senior citizens complained about auto drivers in the city demanding more money and denying services.
- **Tree survey:** A citizen questioned the disappearance of 1,249 trees in JP Park, citing a survey that showed 7,400 trees initially, which has now been reduced to 6,151.
- **Contractors' issues:** A contractor complained about delayed payments for completed underground drainage projects, stating that he has been waiting for payment for over 10 years.
- **Traffic and potholes:** Citizens highlighted the increasing number of accidents and shortage of officers at roadblocks near Rockline Mall and Dasarahalli.
- **Garbage mismanagement:** A citizen from Mathikere 7th Cross complained about illegal garbage disposal and rat infestation.

Suresh Kumar: No reply 50 days after House query on pollution

BENGALURU, DHNS: BJP leader and Rajajinagar MLA S Suresh Kumar expressed his disappointment on Sunday that his starred question on environmental pollution had gone unanswered by the Forest, Ecology and Environment Department, even after 50 days of asking the question.

"On August 21, I had asked a starred question on whether the government was aware of environmental pollution worsening in Bengaluru, and if yes, what was Bengaluru's position in the country, what were the reasons for it and what steps had been taken by the government to prevent it. Instead of answering my question, Minister Eshwar Khandre had sought 15 days to answer it," Kumar said in a post on his Facebook account.

Noting that Khandre had consented to his suggestion that the minister should conduct a meeting with his officials and discuss the issue before providing an answer, Kumar said he had reminded the minister about the same on September 6.

He claimed to have written another letter on September 26.

"Today is October 12. That means, even 50 days after my question, there hasn't been a written answer or a meeting with officials. The government's functioning style, which doesn't respond to such an important issue, shows lack of sensitivity," Kumar said.

◆ WEATHER ◆

Overview: Rainfall occurred at few places over Coastal, South Interior & dry weather prevails over North Interior K'taka.
Forecast Oct 13: Partly cloudy sky. Light rain likely at one or two places.

INTERIOR NORTH

Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Belagavi	29.6	18.4	0.0
Bidar	31.2	18.6	0.0
Vijayapura	30.5	19	0.0
Dharwad	31.0	19.6	0.0
Haveri	28.4	20.2	0.0
Kalaburagi	33.2	21.0	0.0
Raichur	31.6	19.0	0.0
COASTAL			
Honnavar	31.6	22.9	0.8
Karwar	32.6	25.6	0.0
Shirali	NA	NA	NA
Mangaluru	30.9	23.1	8.2

INTERIOR SOUTH

Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Agumbe	26.9	20.5	1.0
Bengaluru	29.0	20.8	0.0
Ballari	NA	NA	NA
Chamarajanagar	--	--	--
Chikkamagaluru	--	--	--
Chitradurga	29.0	20.2	2.6
Davangere	27.5	19.0	5.4
Hassan	28.8	NA	12.0
Mysuru	32.4	20.0	0.0
Madikeri	--	--	--
Kolar	28.2	18.0	0.0
OTHER STATIONS			
New Delhi	31.0	20.0	NIL
Kolkata	33.0	25.0	NIL
Mumbai	31.0	26.0	NA
Chennai	31.0	27.0	NA
Pune	32.0	19.0	NA
Hyderabad	29.0	23.0	NA
Th'puram	33.0	25.0	NIL

Socio-edu survey: Digitisation info to be stored with data centre

Data collected manually during previous survey

SUJAY B M
BENGALURU, DHNS

The digitisation of the ongoing social and educational survey by the state commission for backward classes has simplified the data collection process, with all details directly entering the servers of the State Data Centre.

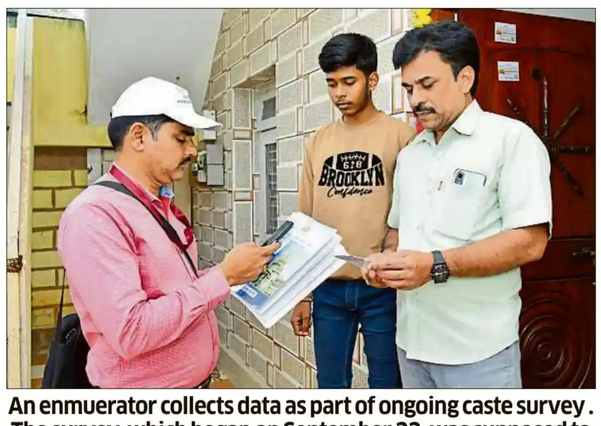
The survey, which began on September 22, was supposed to end on October 7. However, it has been extended till October 18 across the state and up to October 20 in the Greater Bengaluru Area (GBA) limits.

Speaking to *DH*, Backward Classes Welfare Department Commissioner K A Dayananda explained that the information submitted by the enumerators immediately gets stored in the servers of the SDC, after which even the enumerators cannot see it.

"The High Court has strictly mandated the SDC not to share the data with anyone except the Backward Classes Commission. After the survey is over, we will take only the information that's relevant for us. The commission will analyse the data alongside a team from the e-governance department," he added.

During the Cabinet meeting on October 9, the government decided to develop new technologies at a cost of Rs 38.33 crore at the SDC.

During the previous survey overseen by the Kantharaj-led backward classes commission in 2015, the process was longer, as the data was collected manually and was digitised by Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL).



An enmuerator collects data as part of ongoing caste survey. The survey, which began on September 22, was supposed to end on October 7. However, it has been extended till October 18 across the state and up to October 20 in the Greater Bengaluru Area limits. DH FILE PHOTO

"We had coded the process, but it was handwritten. In every taluk, BEL used to keep 10-15 data operators, who would digitise the survey," said K N Lingappa, a member of the Backward Casses Commission headed by H Kantharaj.

The data was validated by the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore (IIM-B). It was later analysed by BEL itself.

"The new process is more advanced technologically. Also, during our survey, the tahsildars, assistant commissioners and deputy commissioners didn't work to the same extent. But this time, the chief secretary and BCW secretary are conducting daily virtual meetings with respective DCs. That way, officials have become more alert," Lingappa said.

However, Lingappa cautioned that to make use of the advanced methods, the survey had to be proper.

"We had surveyed 94.5% of the population. They need to at least survey 95%. In rural places, the survey is doing well but the challenge will be in Bengaluru. Except for Brahmins, all other castes will enumerate themselves. Brahmins are not interested as they won't gain anything from this survey."

According to data from the commission, 1.43 crore of the estimated 1.87 crore households (76.49%) in the state were covered by the end of Sunday.

BJP's Mahila Morcha urges NCW to visit state

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Karnataka unit of BJP's Mahila Morcha has urged the National Commission for Women (NCW) to visit the state claiming that women's safety and security were under threat in Karnataka since May 2023.

In a letter to the president of the NCW, the morcha's Karnataka president C Manjula, claimed that there had been a "rapid increase" in the number of rape and murder cases, maternal deaths and POCSO cases across the state since the Congress came to power.

Pointing out that it was a pressing issue across the state, Manjula accused the state government of neglecting it.

'Depts ignorant'

"The Women and Child Development and Home departments are completely ignorant and have proven their incapability to safeguard women," she added.

The letter cited 18 incidents, including a claim that the Shakti scheme of the Congress – one of its five guarantees – was a "complete failure."

Child helpline coordinator arrested for extortion

KOLAR GOLD FIELDS, DHNS: The police on Sunday arrested the coordinator of district child helpline centre on the charges of extorting money from a man who had allegedly married a minor girl.

According to police, Kalyankumar, the coordinator, had received a call on the helpline informing him about a pregnant minor girl in a village.

On the basis of this information, Kalyankumar went to the residence of the man who had married the said girl, and demanded Rs 50,000 from him for hushing up the case. The said man paid Rs 30,000 in three instalments and had sought time to pay the balance.

Since Kalyankumar threatened to inform police if balance was not paid, the family members of the girl approached police.

The police registered a case and arrested both the man who married minor girl and Kalyankumar.

Ban RSS activities on govt...

RSS, From Page 1

"From the point of view of children, youths, public and social harmony, I request you to ban all activities of the RSS in the name of Sanghik or Baithak in government and aided schools, fields, parks, temples belonging to the Muzrai Department, places of archaeological department and other government places," the minister added.

The letter was shared by the chief minister's office on Sunday, when the RSS conducted patha sanchalans (route marches) across the city.

Some city-based activists termed the lathi-wielding route marches as illegal, pointing out that lathi was a weapon and that article 19 (1) (b) of the Constitution allows only peaceful demonstrations.

BYV attacks Priyank

Meanwhile, BJP state president BY Vijayendra slammed Priyank for the letter.

"Only people not knowing the background and activities of the RSS and who speak for publicity can talk like this. If a person in a responsible position like Priyank Kharge has written such an irresponsible letter, it's a display of his foolishness. Not now, the Congress had banned the RSS two-three times in the past. But instances of the same Congress withdrawing those bans are in front of the nation."

Vijayendra also claimed that the Congress government had allowed the RSS to participate in the Republic Day parade during the Sino-Indian war.

"Speaking of banning the RSS again is not something that they can do. He may be eyeing the chief minister's spot, and it seems like he has written such a letter to appease the Gandhi family."

'Kari Topi MLA': DKS, Munirathna lock horns

Kari Topi, From Page 1

Police personnel eventually escorted a protesting Munirathna away from the venue.

Shivakumar later clarified that the event was not political and was intended only to address citizens' concerns. Reacting to the MLA's outburst, he said: "He is just doing politics; maybe, he is mentally ill. We have come to solve problems, not to create any."

He continued: "When we look at the attitude and behaviour of MLA Munirathna, I understand you are living in hell. I can understand your frustration for electing an MLA like this."

Expressing unhappiness over "obstruction" of his public interaction programme by the MLA's followers, he said, "Munirathna doesn't have patience. It is his nature to obstruct others' programmes. I know that you feel sad that you have chosen an MLA like this. Give him the right reply when the time comes."

The political feud spilled outside the park, where Munirathna staged a sit-in. Speaking to reporters, he claimed that DyCM had planned to "destroy his political career" and even plotted to "murder" him to promote his political rival, Kusuma Hanumantharayappa. The MLA demanded an apology for "insulting" the RSS.

Shivakumar and Munirathna have a long-running feud. The MLA was arrested in cheating and rape cases.

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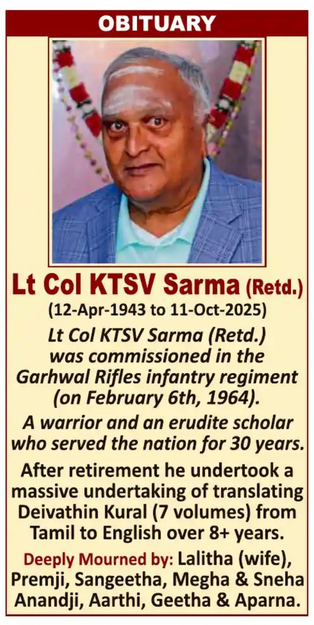
OBITUARY
Lt Col KTSV Sarma (Retd.)
(12-Apr-1943 to 11-Oct-2025)
Lt Col KTSV Sarma (Retd.) was commissioned in the Garhwal Rifles infantry regiment (on February 6th, 1964).
A warrior and an erudite scholar who served the nation for 30 years.
After retirement he undertook a massive undertaking of translating Deivathin Kural (7 volumes) from Tamil to English over 8+ years.
Deeply Mourned by: Lalitha (wife), Premji, Sangeetha, Megha & Sneha Anandji, Aarthi, Geetha & Aparna.

I would request all to avoid...

Mamata, From Page 1

"Students from various states are coming here to study. I would request all to avoid going out at night. Police can't know who is going out and when. The authorities of private medical colleges have the responsibility to take care of their students," Mamata told journalists at Kolkata airport before embarking on her second visit to flood and landslides-hit north Bengal.

"Everyone has a right to go anywhere. There is, however, a system in place for whoever stays in a hostel," she said, adding that her government had a policy of zero tolerance towards all crimes against women and that the police would take stringent actions against the culprits responsible for gangraping the student, who hailed from Odisha.

The BJP strongly protested the CM's statement. "Her (chief minister's) comment that women should not go out after evening was not only insensitive but also insulting. She has failed to ensure the safety of the women of the state, and now she has resorted to victim-blaming to cover up her government's failure," BJP state unit chief Samik Bhattacharya said.

The saffron party staged a protest demonstration in Kolkata on Sunday.

Mamata, herself, led the TMC to turn the tables on the BJP, pointing out that the culprits responsible for such heinous crimes against women often go unpunished in the states ruled by the BJP.

Social media crimes see spike in Bengaluru

Social Media, From Page 1

"Many young girls and women post their photos on social media without caution," the official added.

"Many of these photos are misused. It is important to exercise caution. There have been instances where people have misused such photos and women are even blackmailed to give ransom to bring down such photos from the internet," the official added.

Recently, the Bengaluru City Police made a series of arrests after Sandalwood actress Ramya received vulgar messages on social media.

"Many of them tend to ignore such messages and, one day, it goes out of hand. People should report such incidents," a senior police officer said.

Many women also receive obscene photos and messages, which can also be reported.

According to senior police officials, all the victims have to do is take screenshots of the messages or posts, note down the time when it was posted and report to the nearest police station with the details.

However, sources said that conviction rates in these cases are not great owing to a lack of evidence.

"Many of them file a complaint late. By that time, evidence is destroyed. The conviction also depends on the skills of the investigating officer since investigating such crimes requires a different skill set. We are, however, improving our quality of investigation as well," one of the officials said.

While the number of social media-related crimes is increasing, investigating such crimes is not easy.

Marshalling evidence to make the case strong and tracking down the accused is a big task, officials said. Police are also hamstrung since the social media platforms are not very responsive.

"Most of the handles are anonymous. Then we will have to get in touch with the social media platforms and service providers. These companies are not very responsive and this delays the whole process," a senior officer said.

In many cases, complainants do not provide enough details, another official said.

"Many of the victims are afraid and they would have deleted some messages or formatted their phones. Also, it is important that they reach out to the police at the earliest. If the complaints are filed late, evidence is destroyed and the chances of tracking down the accused decreases," the official noted.

Scores killed as Pak-Afghan border clashes escalate

Pak-Afghan, From Page1

Zabihullah Mujahid, the Taliban government's chief spokesman, said that 58 Pakistani soldiers were killed and around 30 others wounded during the operations Saturday night, Tolo News reported.

Mujahid added that during the retaliatory operations across the Durand Line, 20 Pakistani security outposts were destroyed, and numerous weapons and military equipment were seized. He said that nine Afghan soldiers were killed and 16 others were wounded in the operations, according to the report. The spokesperson said the operation was halted at midnight following requests from Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

Pakistani officials said they have closed crossings along the 2,600-km border with Afghanistan.

DH Classifieds

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PERSONAL
Change of Name
I, SABERA Begum (D/o Mohammed Haneef), R/o Gulbarga (Kalaburagi), Karnataka, was wrongly named "Sabaira Begum." My correct name is "Sabera Begum." – Sabera Begum

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Kerala land stir marks one year amid HC order on waqf claim

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

The protest by over 600 families from Munambam coastal village near Kochi marked its first anniversary on Sunday, with hopes of reclaiming revenue rights over their land reignited by a recent high court observation declaring the waqf claim on their property illegal. However, the path ahead remains far from smooth.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan is set to hold a meeting on Monday to discuss next steps following the HC division bench's order, which stated that the 2019 declaration of the land as waqf was "bad in law".

Following the court order, the residents' action council intensified pressure on the government to restore their revenue rights, prompting the CM to convene the meeting.

However, sources pointed out that since the matter is still pending before the Waqf Tribunal and the HC did not formally quash the Waqf Board's 2019 order declaring the land as waqf, restoring revenue rights to the residents may not be easy.

The Justice CN Ramachandran Commission, appointed by the state government to examine the issue, is learnt to have recommended either a consensus-based resolution or government intervention through its powers as possible remedies.

Meanwhile, waqf land protection forums have decided to challenge the HC order in the Supreme Court.

"The HC ruling contradicts earlier court decisions on the matter. Even the Ramachandran Commission did not refute the waqf claim over the land," a lawyer associated with the forum told *DH*.

Law Minister P Rajeev said the Waqf Tribunal remains the final authority on the matter, and the government would examine how the recent HC judgment could be used to resolve the dispute. The government would seek to advance the recommendations of the Justice Ramachandran Commission.

Government sources said that the issue has already taken on a communal tone, prompting the CPM-led government to tread cautiously, especially with local body and Assembly elections on the horizon. A majority of the affected families belong to the Christian community, and the BJP has been attempting to take political advantage of the matter. Earlier this year, Union Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju visited Munambam and assured residents that amendments to the waqf law could offer a solution. However, his assurances have yet to translate into relief on the ground.

Constitution has kept India united, says CJI

MUMBAI, DHNS: The Constitution has ensured that India remains strong and united while neighbouring countries are facing civil unrest and turmoil, Chief Justice of India B R Gavai said on Sunday, referring to the happenings in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal.

"The country has remained united and on the path of development in war and peace," he said at the inauguration and unveiling of the stone plaque of the new Civil and Criminal Court building at Mandangad in the Ratnagiri district.

"We have seen the Emergency as well, but we have remained strong and united. It is because of B R Ambedkar's Constitution, which sets us apart from neighbouring countries that are witnessing turmoil," said the CJI, referring to the Emergency imposed between 1975-77 by then-prime minister Indira Gandhi.

"And when we compare ourselves with our neighbouring countries, whether it is Nepal, Bangladesh, or Sri Lanka, the difference in their situations and ours, in my view, is because of the strength of the Indian Constitution. As Ambedkar rightly said, until social and economic democracy is achieved in this country, political democracy has no real meaning," he said. The CJI also said that in the last 22 years as a judge, "I have stood for the decentralisation of justice and ensured several judicial infrastructure projects are completed".

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Potential roadblocks in Gaza 'peace deal'

Developments in the week ahead are critical to determine the course of the so-called peace deal for Gaza. Few details are known of US President Donald Trump's peace proposal, to which Israel and Hamas have agreed, except that it is to be signed in Egypt on Monday. Trump's deals have had a way of going awry. Yet, if his proposal for Gaza holds out hope, it is because of the break in hostilities. The ceasefire, which is the first step, seems to be holding despite provocations. This in itself is welcome, coming as it does after one of the deadliest wars waged against unarmed people, especially children, women and the elderly in Gaza. If the ceasefire, which has proved elusive in the last two years, holds while both sides release hostages to create conditions for pursuing peace, that in itself would be a major accomplishment.

Such a pause in the war would be a high point in Trump's second term, and for the US, which is brokering peace. The country is involved in this conflict with its backing for Israel. For that very reason, any claim of durable peace is premature, if not suspect; agreements have been signed before, only to be discarded before they are accepted by all stakeholders. The second reason for hope, despite Israel's genocidal war crimes to which much of the world's capitals have been silent spectators, is that Hamas has been considerably weakened. However, to see this as imminent surrender could be a misreading as Hamas is apparently still strong enough for the US and Israel to insist on its disarmament. A Hamas representative has said disarmament is "out of the question".

Donald Trump's plan, ready for signing, calls for cautious optimism

Disarmament of Hamas, one of many hurdles to be overcome, is critical after the two sides release the hostages. Will countries that prevailed on Hamas to accept the peace plan succeed in getting Hamas to go further? The withdrawal of Israeli troops hinges on Hamas accepting disarmament, a key condition in the 20-point peace plan. Without disarmament being negotiated to the satisfaction of Hamas, the processes towards stability may well get stalled. Worse, they may be seized by Israel to resume its killings in Gaza. The plan's potential in terms of reconstruction depends on the acceptability of the transition mechanisms and governance model. These cannot be put in place by undermining the Palestinian Authority and vesting oversight in a partisan West-led group. Unless details of the peace plan are worked out to the satisfaction of the Palestinians, they are unlikely to be won over.

Nobel spotlight on Krasznahorkai

The award of the Nobel Prize in Literature to Hungarian writer Laszlo Krasznahorkai was not entirely unexpected because his name was on the unofficial short list. Such a list circulates every year before the announcement of the award. But he was not a favourite to win because there were more well-known writers on the list. The Swedish Academy is known to make surprise choices and has sometimes faced criticism for not making the best choice. It cannot be faulted for making a wrong choice this year because Krasznahorkai is among the most eminent living writers and is Nobel class. He has won many literary honours in the past, though recognition has been slow because English translations of many of his works have appeared only recently. Though Krasznahorkai is mainly known as a novelist, he is also a screen writer, and his works have been adapted for cinema.

The Swedish Academy has praised him for "his compelling and visionary oeuvre that, in the midst of apocalyptic terror, reaffirms the power of art". He is a novelist in the central European tradition and has the lineage of great writers such as Fyodor Dostoevsky and Franz Kafka. He has an artistic and intellectual kinship with Kafka whose vision has influenced him. Elements of the absurd and the grotesque come together in his work, and his worldview is often considered dystopian. He presents a bleak and melancholic world, but terror and humour co-exist in much of his work, making it daunting, yet human. He started writing in the last few years about communism in Hungary and has faced censorship and oppression. His first novel *Satantango* contained most of the themes that would characterise his later works —not just the ordinariness of life, but also its paranoia, confusion and uncertainty. He drew his artistic sustenance from the life he knew best in Hungary, but was also inspired by his travels to China and Japan. His success lay in universalising those experiences to depict the human condition on his terms. His style is difficult and demanding and he writes long sentences that run into pages. His latest novel *Herscht 07769*, which has just one sentence, depicts fears about the rise of fascism in Europe. But he says he is not a political writer and writes only about society.

The Hungarian writes in the tradition of Dostoevsky and Kafka

The question that often arises about the Nobel Prize is why it often goes to writers from Europe and North America and ignores women writers. Krasznahorkai and most other writers who have been honoured with the world's top literary honour might well deserve it, but there is a long list of writers from other parts of the world who might better deserve it.

RESTLESS REPUBLIC

Democracy and the threat of violence

Leaders should address questions of social injustice, exploitation and oppression to protect hard-won Constitutional rights

PRASENJIT CHOWDHURY

The arrest of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk, who said that frustration among Ladakh's youth grew because the government ignored peaceful appeals for years, betrays the deep-seated fear of the central government and its awareness of the incendiary potential of mass revolts welling out of entrenched grievances.

Nearer home, mob justice and violence, evident from the expression of anger and frustration of the Nepali youth, unseated the K P Oli-led coalition government recently.

Going by the youth-led movement in Nepal, the one which overthrew the regime of Sheikh Hasina last summer, and the ouster of the Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and his brother Mahinda, the prime minister, in 2022, commonalities are not far to seek: runaway corruption, stark inequalities, economic disparities and a deep resentment of the ruling elite.

The 'Gen Z' protests in Nepal might prompt one to ask if such violence could be avoided in a truly democratic set-up.

In the last seven decades, starting with the overthrow of the Rana autocracy in 1951, numerous strikes, demonstrations and uprisings, followed by a temporary lull, Nepal has gone through many churns.

Still, the quest for an inclusive democracy, along with peace-building and republicanism, has been an elusive goal since the people's uprising (or *jana andolan*) in 1990 and 2006.

According to a recent UN report, Bangladesh's former security and intelligence services, alongside violent elements associated with the Awami League party, systematically engaged in a range of serious human rights violations during last year's student-led protests.

As many as 1,400 people may have been killed between July 15 and August 5, and thousands injured, the vast majority of whom were shot by Bangladesh's security forces, during the protests.

Of these, the report indicates that as many as 12-13% of those killed were children. The mobilisation of civil societies, driven by a distinctly anti-authoritarian mood, with a strident demand to put an end to all forms of undemocratic governments became frequent, particularly during the first two decades of the 21st century.

We might see the above instances of violence in India's neighbourhood as the outcome of half-baked democracies and their pitfalls, taking heart in the state of Indian democracy as a shield against any revolutionary fervour and as an antidote to runaway violence. The jury is still out on how democracy affects violence.

Historians point out that the democratic revolution experienced by Western states since the 17th century was

accompanied by a decline in violence. But democracy in its infancy in Britain experienced periods of violent struggle, including food riots, anti-tax rebellions, and Chartist and suffragette protests. Genocide has occurred in democratic states such as Rwanda.

India's first universal franchise general election occurred amid the violence and displacement of Partition, the uncertain and contested integration of the princely states and the forceful quelling of internal dissent.

Sociologist Paul R Brass observes that in the last days of the British Raj, it was not only the case that violence occurred as a consequence of Partition but violence also was a "principal mechanism" for creating the conditions for Partition.

Even though the Indian Constitution supports an inclusive democracy committed to gender and caste equality, legal and constitutional provisions have not been able to fully guarantee state protections against discrimination and political exclusion.

A disproportionately large population of unemployed and under-educated youth, a hopelessly shrinking job market, strain on resources, and its distribution and allocation, are all factors that serve as triggers.

But mistaking the triggers—economic collapse and shortages in Sri Lanka; student quotas and inequality in Bangladesh; social-media ban and corruption allegations in Nepal—for long-standing discontent is a serious pitfall.

The Manipur High Court's 2023 directive, recommending Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for Meiteis, served as a vital trigger. Tribal groups, including the Kuki-Zo groups and the Nagas, perceived it as a threat to their constitutional protections, sparking protests across all tribal districts.

According to a report, a systematic hate campaign, played out through digital media and statements made by the political leadership in prelude to the conflict, escalated the feelings of mistrust and enmity between the warring Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities. These two tribal communities were riven already by historical factors such as ethnic divisions, socio-political marginalisation and land disputes.

In Ladakh, the immediate trigger for the recent violence might seem to be the critical condition of two activists on a hunger strike, Tsering Angchuk and Tashi Dolma, who took part in a 35-day fast demanding statehood and Sixth Schedule protections, essential for preserving Ladakh's fragile ecosystem, land rights and cultural identity.

But the issue has been hanging fire since 2019, with Ladakhi groups repeatedly demanding constitutional safeguards and pressing for statehood for Ladakh, extension of the Sixth Schedule, separate Lok Sabha seats for Leh and Kargil, alongside employment reservations.

Partition massacres, anti-Muslim violence and anti-Sikh riots in India dispel the myth that our democracy is a full-proof shield against violence.

Various forms of violence faced by women such as sex-selective abortion, trafficking, rape, domestic violence, as well as the violence faced by female sex workers and transgenders in India, must be resisted.

There is as much need to address questions of social injustice, exploitation, and oppression as to mend our imperfect democracy, in view of the threats to India's hard-won constitutional practices of democracy, tolerance, and religious pluralism.

(The author is a Kolkata-based commentator on geopolitics, development and culture)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

Staying connected in letter and spirit

The joy of writing and receiving letters is taken away by technology

VINA RANGANATH

As the world observed World Post Day on October 9 and the Department of Posts celebrated National Postal Week from October 7 to 11, loads of memories of our association with the postal department flashed across my mind.

I brought down an assortment of letters that were safely put away in the attic -- postcards, envelopes, inland letters, aerogrammes, and greetings cards -- preserved over several years by my father. They were from all kinds of people – relatives (far and near), friends, classmates, schoolmates, colleagues, once-upon-a-time neighbours, a few eminent people in the society, editors of newspapers and magazines, Aakashvani, the Office of the President of India, our well-wishers... What a wide range of contacts maintained!

I also discovered that the contents covered a wide range of topics. Some amused me, some amazed me, and some brought back the old pleasant memories. I was totally lost in another world for a few hours, reading the congratulatory messages received on scholastic achievements of us siblings, moments of joy and sorrows shared, letters of gratitude, letters seeking advice on certain important issues, letters informing or describing the upcoming occasions or events, interesting newspaper clippings of cartoons, serious articles worth pondering over, letters informing of the academic progress, developments, and achievements of children in schools, colleges, or at work, regular letters reminding one to send money to pay college fees, hostel fees—and in turn to get them reimbursed from the bank—and letters of apology for not having replied on time.

For a moment, it appeared as though the postal department had thrived because of people like my father.

Are we missing out on something in this age of the Internet and advanced communication technology? Do we experience the same joy today as we did when we wrote and received letters then?

There was a time when we would eagerly wait for the arrival of the postman. Irrespective of whom the letter would be addressed to, it would be read by all of us at home. My father would dutifully keep everyone around him informed about what was happening at his end. There would be some who would reply in the same manner. If an expected letter did not come on time from a particular person, my father would shoot out a postcard asking for the reason for the delay. Many of them have appreciated my father's way of keeping in touch.

Reading some of them, I had a hearty laugh considering the period in which they were written and the situation that prevailed at that time.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

State must adopt robust processes to curb scams

Apropos 'Forgery & favour: How officials fuel land scams' (Oct 12), it highlights the persistence of land scams in Karnataka despite large-scale digitisation efforts. The incomplete and poorly integrated digitisation process creates gaps that fraudsters exploit through forged documents and official collusion. Many digital systems rely on outdated or inaccurate manual records, causing discrepancies between online data and ground reality. The recent amendment to the Karnataka Registration Act is a welcome step, but enforcement remains uneven. The misuse of the Aadhaar-enabled Payment System (AePS) to conduct fraudulent transactions is alarming. To safeguard Karnataka's land management system, stronger verification mechanisms, interdepartmental coordination, and transparent accountability are essential. The government must take concrete steps to address these vulnerabilities and hold those responsible accountable.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, Bengaluru

Punish the guilty

This refers to 'Killer cough syrups, an ailing system' (Oct 12). The recent deaths of 24 children in Madhya Pradesh due to 'Coldrif', a cough syrup manufactured by a Chennai-based pharmaceutical firm, are appalling. The fact that this syrup, intended for children, can cause renal failure is a clear indication of the lack of effective checks and balances in the system. Pharmaceutical companies have been manufacturing and marketing substandard drugs with devastating side effects. The central government's order to inspect all drug manufacturing units is a step in the right direction. Companies indulging in malfeasance should face strict action, including the revocation of their licences and prosecution of those responsible.

C V Aravind, Bengaluru

Investigate allegations

The recent Nobel Peace Prize win by Maria Corina Machado raises uncomfortable questions about the integrity of the selection process, given the potential espionage preceding the announcement. The sudden surge in her odds, coupled with the suspicion of a leak, challenges the credibility of the secrecy that has historically defined the Nobel process. While the Nobel Institute denies any deliberate leak, the possibility that external actors may have inside access undermines the integrity of the award. This incident highlights the growing intersection of politics, security, and international influence, which complicates the sanctity of the Nobel Peace Prize in today's world. The Nobel Committee must investigate these allegations thoroughly to restore faith in the award.

Vijaykumar H K, Raichur

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

The Modi government believes in RTI but it is the Right to Intimidate (and not Right to Information). For the Modi government, RTI now stands for 'Readiness To Intimidate'...The government has put RTI up for mercy killing. It is making it a toothless body...

Jairam Ramesh, Congress leader

Secrecy is the linchpin of abuse of power...Its enabling force...

Glenn Greenwald

TO BE PRECISE

IN PERSPECTIVE

AI and the road to clean energy

The complexities of renewable energy production make the sector well-suited to AI applications

BHARATH RANGANATH

Renewable energy is booming. In 2024, the world added a record 585 GW of clean power, and grids everywhere are stepping up to welcome the surge. India mirrors this momentum: its renewable capacity crossed 234 GW in June 2025, putting the nation in a strong position to save fuel and cut carbon at scale. The next leap is smarter orchestration that turns torrents of weather, market, and asset data into real-time decisions. When utilities trade static spreadsheets for digital twins and AI-driven dispatch, they can trim curtailment fees, ease local bottlenecks, and unlock the full value of every new megawatt, keeping solar parks productive and neighbourhood feeders reliably green.

A well-managed power network requires detailed knowledge of its infrastructure, including weather intelligence and forecasts that help reduce costs for both solar and wind energy, with real-time Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) combined with AI models. GenAI platforms swiftly summarise lengthy tender documents, identifying potential risks and opportunities, while reducing review times from days to mere hours. Integrating AI-enabled system enhancements via cloud computing into real-time operations strengthens baseline systems, resulting in greater operational efficiency and accuracy.

Effective technology integration clearly impacts energy distribution efficiency and profitability for ESCOMs. Renewable Energy Sources (RES) leveraging advanced technologies have successfully reduced transmission losses and improved operational performance. India has very ambitious plans to add nearly 300 GW of clean energy between now and 2030, which means adding nearly 60 GW every year. These insights underline the critical role of AI and technology integration in achieving India's ambitious RE targets.

At CoP28, global leaders agreed on the goal of rapidly scaling clean energy to achieve a tripling of RE capacity and a doubling of energy efficiency improvements by 2030. The Statistical Review of World Energy 2025 demonstrates that despite unprecedented growth in RE over the past decade, the share of fossil fuels has hardly been dented.

Asia is home to more than half the world's population and is now responsible for over half of global primary energy consumption. The energy growth curve has been steep. The Asia-Pacific region accounts for nearly half of the world's primary energy use, driven by rapid economic growth, a large population, and accelerating urbanisation. Home to around 60% of the global population — and some of the largest and fastest-growing economies such as China, India and Indonesia — demand for energy has surged and is projected to continue rising in the coming decades.

The region is now the leading contributor to annual greenhouse gas emissions, with a 51% share of global carbon emissions. Within Asia, India is a major hotspot of economic growth. Unfortunately, this growth has hitherto been heavily reliant on fossil fuels. As the country seeks to scale up its economy towards developed-nation status, it must also modernise and decarbonise its vast energy system, which is set to expand rapidly in line with economic growth metrics.

It is in this context that AI assumes vital importance for India. With the advent of Generative AI, new possibilities have begun to emerge — enhancing efficiency, optimisation, and sustainability with far-reaching effects. The complexities of renewable energy production make the sector well-suited to AI and GenAI applications. Machine learning and data processing capabilities are key to improving the efficiency and reliability of RE systems.

The overall expansion trajectory of AI in clean energy production can be characterised in four broad stages: early AI applications in renewables; growth and expansion; the emergence of GenAI and its effects across the value chain; and the convergence of AI with quantum computing (QC) and high-performance computing (HPC).

Modern AI, in conjunction with other technologies, has opened up a world of new possibilities, though not without challenges. AI systems are prone to adversarial attacks, which exploit their heavy reliance on data and can disrupt the reliability of energy systems. The rapid growth in demand for AI specialists has created a recruitment bottleneck, with a significant shortage of skilled professionals in both the AI and renewable energy sectors.

Regulatory frameworks for responsible AI deployment are essential and are slowly taking shape, but they continue to face persistent challenges. It becomes crucial for governments and regulatory agencies to evolve and establish precise directives for deploying strong AI applications.

However, the possibilities offered by AI and other modern technologies are immense, especially in dealing with the effects of climate change. AI and QC will be demanding frontiers of technology. The country's recent track record in digital innovation is impressive. We have a unique opportunity: a large market, a large-scale carbon challenge and a vast, competent talent pool that must be harnessed to lead the way for the world.

(The writer is research scholar, California Public University, US)

The paradox of Venezuela's Nobel: Mistaking defiance for democracy

MOUSUMI ROY

The Nobel Peace Prize has always carried a heavy burden of symbolism. It rewards not just courage, but the kind of courage that advances peace, democracy, and justice. This year, that symbolism feels particularly fraught. María Corina Machado, Venezuela's most prominent opposition leader, has been awarded the Nobel for her struggle against Nicolás Maduro's repressive regime. Yet, while we share the world's condemnation of Maduro's corruption, brutality, and systematic destruction of Venezuela's democratic institutions, we cannot celebrate this choice.

There is no question that Maduro's rule represents one of the most tragic chapters in Venezuela's modern history. His government has crushed dissent, jailed opponents, falsified elections, and presided over the collapse of a once-prosperous nation. More than seven million Venezuelans have fled since 2014, a mass exodus driven by hunger, hyperinflation, and fear. The regime's violence and cynical manipulation of democratic forms to perpetuate personal power have been rightly denounced. But opposition to tyranny does not compel us to cheer for anyone who happens to oppose it. The moral universe of politics is not binary.

To put it plainly, Machado is an ideologue of the far right. Her vision for Venezuela is a textbook case of radical free-market dogma: an economy stripped of protections, privatised to the bone, and tethered to the whims of international capital. This might be marketed as "freedom", but in a country where low-income people have borne the heaviest costs of economic collapse, such policies would only deepen inequality and exclusion. Social justice cannot emerge from a bonfire of the welfare state.

More troubling still is Machado's long record of supporting anti-democratic and interventionist measures. She was one of the signatories of the Carmona Decree during the short-lived 2002 coup that sought to depose Hugo Chávez and dissolve the National Assembly. For someone now lionised as a defender of democracy, that historical stain is not trivial; it reveals a willingness to suspend democratic principles when it suits her political ends.

Her more recent pronouncements have followed the same logic of confrontation over dialogue. Machado has openly called for US military intervention, arguing that "a credible threat of force" is the only way to remove Maduro. She has backed US attacks on Venezuelan vessels in international waters, and her international alliances read like a who's who of the global right: support for Donald Trump, admiration for Latin America's reactionary movements, and close ties with European nationalist parties. These are not the instincts of a democrat-in-waiting; they are the habits of a politician who equates power with righteousness. That she has become the face of Venezuela's democratic struggle says as much about the world's hunger for simple stories as it does about the country's fractured reality.

The Nobel Committee's citation praises her "tireless work for democracy", yet democracy in the 21st century cannot be reduced to mere opposition against tyranny. It must also mean a commitment to pluralism, social equity, and human dignity, the very principles Machado's ideology undermines. Of course, it is possible to admire Machado's courage without endorsing her worldview. She has endured harassment, bans from the office, and constant threats. Her persistence in the face of repression deserves recognition. Yet heroism against a dictator does not automatically make one a democrat. History is filled with revolutionaries who, once in power, became mirror images of the regimes they toppled.

Venezuela's tragedy is that it has been forced into a false choice: between a kleptocratic left-wing autocracy and a neoliberal crusader promising salvation through privatisation and US tutelage. Both visions betray the social foundations of democracy. Between them lies a quieter, more hopeful alternative: the activists, journalists, human rights defenders, and community organisers who have kept alive the dream of a Venezuela that is both free and fair. They work without fanfare, often in exile, often in poverty. They seek neither coups nor miracles, but reconstruction through institutions, reconciliation, and shared dignity. It is these Venezuelans, who fight for democracy and social justice in tandem, who truly deserve the world's recognition.

The Nobel Peace Prize has often erred on symbolism over substance. But awarding it to Machado risks conflating "opposition" with "peace" and "anti-Maduro" with "pro-democracy". Venezuela deserves better than this Manichaean narrative. It deserves international solidarity that understands democracy not as the victory of one camp over another but as the collective, painstaking project of rebuilding trust and equity after years of ruin.

True peace requires more than courage against oppression; it requires a moral vision that transcends revenge and resists the seductions of ideology. Machado may be brave, but bravery alone does not make her.

(The author writes about politics, material culture, and economic history)

A telecommunications blackout and restrictions on social media have further isolated Afghans who rely on the Internet as a lifeline

ELIAN PELTIER

Afghan women waiting inside a bank in Kandahar, Afghanistan, last week, after a two-day telecommunications blackout. AFP

Afghanistan's digital dark age

Airports and banks were forced to shut down. Government employees idled aimlessly in the corridors of their ministries. Teenage girls, barred from attending school, lost much of their access to the outside world.

In shutting down the Internet and cellphone services across Afghanistan last month, the Taliban government turned the clock back decades, in a move reminiscent of their first time in power from 1996 to 2001. Connectivity came back after two days, but this week, the Afghan government blocked certain types of content on social media apps like Instagram and Facebook, signalling that it would only tolerate tightly controlled access to the internet.

Over the four years since they returned to power, the Taliban have gradually strengthened their grip on Afghan society, at times prohibiting content creators from posting on YouTube in one province, or forbidding television channels from broadcasting images of living beings in another. But the internet blackout and the suspension of cellphone services hit the entire country at the same time last month, leaving many Afghans worried that it could go on indefinitely, or happen again even after service was restored.

"We are always at home, so the Internet was our only way to tell other people that we are alive," said Mahsa, 19, who was in the middle of a math lesson with a US-sponsored online education program when the blackout began. (*The New York Times* agreed to identify her by only her first name because she feared backlash by the government.)

Because the Taliban have banned education for girls after sixth grade, online education has been the only avenue for female students like Mahsa to pursue their studies.

Afghan officials have not communicated publicly about the shutdown, and spokesmen from multiple government agencies have not responded to requests for comment. But officials outside the country and analysts have said the Internet shutdown was the result of an order by Afghanistan's leader, Sheikh Haibatullah Akhundzada, who has sought to restrict Internet access to prevent "immoral acts."

"The Internet shutdown is the most damaging decision the emir has made after closing schools for girls," Asfandyar Mir, a senior fellow in the South Asia programme at the Stimson Centre in Washington, said about Akhundzada. "This time, it affected everyone and had immediate consequences, including for the economy."

Why the Internet came back after two days remains unclear. But officials outside the country, analysts and one aide to an Afghan government official said in interviews that some Afghan officials had most likely recognised that the shutdown was unsustainable and had restored Internet access — with or without Akhundzada's approval.

The Times was not able to independently verify the claim. If confirmed, the resistance from government officials would be the latest signal of a schism between Kabul-based ministers who are in favour of fewer social restrictions, including lifting those on women and girls, and the ultra-conservative Akhundzada, who lives in Kandahar, in southern Afghanistan, away from the central government.

"Defiance of the Emir is anathema to Taliban ideology, which is based on allegiance to him," said Graeme Smith, an author and analyst with two decades of experience in Afghanistan. "But this looks like a rare example of internal pushback against the leader."

The Internet shutdown was not addressed at a gathering convened by Akhundzada in Kandahar with hundreds of provincial and district governors shortly after online access was restored, according to two participants. Signs of dissension within the group were not present either, though Akhundzada urged the attendees to show unity and respect their superiors, according to the two participants. They spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not allowed to publicly discuss the meeting.

For countless Afghans, the Internet shutdown paralysed daily life. Although Internet access is patchy in some parts of Afghanistan, smartphone use has proliferated in recent years with the expansion of 4G networks and the widespread availability of cheap devices.

In Herat, a buzzing city in northwestern Afghanistan, the blackout nearly ruined Nazir Hussaini's two travel businesses, he said. He could not exchange currency nor register visa applications for clients seeking to cross into Iran, about 70 miles away.

"It felt like we were thrown back 30 years, trapped in the dark and unable to breathe," Hussaini said.

Muhammad, a police officer in Kabul, was on his way to the police station for a late shift when the Internet went off around 5 pm on September 29. When a crime is reported in the area where he serves, which is home to hundreds of thousands of people, Muhammad said that he and his colleagues would first share the news in an internal WhatsApp group. But as they could not communicate online for two days, and local elders who would usually call them to report a crime could not reach them, Muhammad said that he and his colleagues did not conduct any investigations.

The Internet shutdown further harmed the Afghan economy, already battered by multiple crises.

It cut off many Afghans from their relatives who send much-needed funds from abroad. It imperilled the work of UN agencies and humanitarian agencies that have provided relief to the victims of an earthquake that killed more than 2,200 people last month, and to many of the nearly three million Afghans who have returned to Afghanistan this year amid a wave of forced returns and deportations from neighbouring Pakistan and Iran.

Human rights defenders and Afghanistan observers have warned that restricted access to online media platforms would severely undermine women's and girl's mental health.

Mahsa, the high school student, echoed those concerns.

"With a shutdown or restricted access to Internet, you're in a grey zone," she said, "and if something happens to me, nobody will know."

Escalating tensions with Pakistan

Tensions along the border of Afghanistan and Pakistan surged on Sunday after a fierce overnight clash of the countries' militaries, with both sides exchanging heavy fire in one of the sharpest escalations of violence between the neighbours in years.

The latest flare-up came after attacks last week in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, and at a market near the border, which the Taliban government attributed to Pakistan.

Afghan officials said on Sunday that their security forces had targeted Pakistani military outposts along the border in what they described as "retaliatory operations," following what Kabul said were Pakistani airstrikes that had violated Afghan airspace and struck a market on Thursday.

The Taliban government claimed to have killed dozens of Pakistani soldiers in the overnight attacks.

Pakistani officials confirmed that Pakistan's military had exchanged fire along the border, killing several Taliban fighters, but they did not immediately address details of the confrontation or the Taliban government's claims.

The overnight fighting raised concerns that isolated violence could spill into a broader conflict between the two countries, whose governments have become increasingly hostile to each other in recent months. Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Iran have urged restraint. India, which on Friday announced expanded diplomatic ties with the Taliban government, did not immediately react to the clash.

Zabihullah Mujahid, the Taliban government's chief spokesman, told reporters on Sunday that the fighting had stopped at midnight after requests from Qatar and Saudi Arabia. "The situation along all official borders and demarcation lines of Afghanistan is under full control," he said, warning that any violation of Afghanistan's sovereignty "will not go unanswered."

Pakistan said last week that it had conducted "a series of retribution operations" against Pakistani militants, but it did not mention Afghanistan directly. Pakistan has repeatedly accused Kabul of harbouring Pakistani militants who stage attacks from Afghan soil, and it has threatened retribution. But it stopped short of claiming responsibility for the explosions on Thursday in Kabul and at the border market.

Without addressing the specifics of the most recent violence, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif of Pakistan on Sunday praised his country's armed forces for what he described as a "strong and effective response" to recent Afghan provocations along the border, saying the military had "destroyed several of their border posts, forcing a retreat."

The New York Times

Is actor Vijay taking a risky leap?

P S PARAMESWARAN

The connection between cinema and politics in Tamil Nadu is as old as the state's post-independence identity. From Annadurai's eloquence to MGR's heroism, from Karunanidhi's literary politics to Jayalalithaa's commanding leadership, Tamil Nadu's political theatre has long shared its stage with the silver screen. Now, as actor Vijay formally enters the fray, one wonders – is this the right time, and is he the right man for the moment?

In pre-Independence India, politics was rooted in sacrifice and idealism. Gandhi, Patel, and Bose stood for moral courage and unity, not personal ambition. But as India matured, politics evolved – from idealism to identity. Tamil Nadu became the epicentre of this shift, blending regional pride, cinema, and populism into a powerful model of mass politics.

The Dravidian movement, born from Periyar's Self-Respect philosophy, emphasised rationalism, linguistic pride, and social equality. Annadurai gave it mass appeal through his words and empathy, becoming the state's first non-Congress Chief Minister. Then came M G Ramachandran – the screen hero who became the saviour in real life. His welfare-driven governance and charisma made him immortal in public memory. Karunanidhi added intellectual depth and narrative strength to Dravidian politics, while Jayalalithaa redefined power with authority and grace in a male-dominated arena. Each of these leaders shared one gift – they understood the pulse of the people. They were not just stars or politicians; they embodied Tamil aspirations.

In that long lineage stands Joseph Vijay Chandrasekhar, "Thalapathy" to his millions of fans. Over three decades, he has transformed from a youthful entertainer into a cinematic crusader against corruption and injustice. His films have consistently echoed themes of accountability, youth empowerment, and reform – preparing audiences, perhaps unconsciously, for his political debut.

Vijay's reach is unmatched, especially among the youth. His fan clubs, long engaged in welfare activities, have evolved into structured social units. His new party, Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), is seen as the natural culmination of that evolution.

Vijay's timing is both promising and perilous. Tamil Nadu's two Dravidian giants – DMK and AIADMK – are navigating leadership transitions and ideological fatigue. The once-fiery Dravidian narrative now feels procedural. The younger electorate, restless for change, craves a new vocabulary – one combining moral integrity with modern aspiration.

In that vacuum, Vijay could find his moment. His mass appeal, digital influence, and clean slate offer him a launchpad few enjoy. Yet politics demands far more than popularity – it requires structure, ideology, and staying power.

However, Vijay's early political steps have not been flawless. The tragic Karur incident, where more than 40 people lost their lives during a crowd surge at one of his events, cast a shadow over his otherwise disciplined image. Many felt that Vijay's muted response and delayed outreach reflected political inexperience. In a state as emotionally attuned as Tamil Nadu, such moments can shape long-term perceptions.

Equally, his public speeches have yet to make a strong ideological impact. His rhetoric, often generic, lacks the conviction or clarity that defined the Dravidian icons. Unless he articulates a vision grounded in Tamil socio-political realities, he risks appearing as a star searching for a cause – not a statesman shaping one.

Tamil Nadu's electorate has matured. Charisma alone no longer guarantees success. MGR had welfare; Karunanidhi had ideology; Jayalalithaa had decisiveness. Vijay must now define his own political grammar—as the voice of the youth, the champion of clean governance, or the architect of a new social compact.

His entry has sparked curiosity and hope among first-time voters but also scepticism among seasoned observers. To sustain momentum, Vijay must expand beyond fan-based mobilisation, build credible leadership, and demonstrate ideological depth.

Vijay's political debut marks a new chapter in Tamil Nadu's ongoing experiment with cinema and democracy. His entry reflects both the people's yearning for renewal and the enduring allure of star power. Whether he emerges as a serious reformer or fades as another celebrity experiment will depend on his ability to convert emotion into execution and applause into action.

If he can learn from missteps like Karur, anchor his politics in purpose, and speak not just to fans but to citizens, Vijay could yet script a remarkable transformation. But in Tamil Nadu's exacting political culture, charisma without conviction is a short-lived story.

(The author is an entrepreneur and a freelance writer)

OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

50 YEARS AGO: OCTOBER 1975

China continues to interfere with India: PM

New Delhi, October 12
Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has accused China of continuing its interference in India. "The Chinese have been instigating some of our people on the borders. We have recovered Chinese arms and books from people who have been encouraged to go across, undertake guerilla training and come back. This interference has been continuing, and is not limited to India," Mrs. Gandhi said in an interview to the *Sunday Telegraph* of London, the text of which was released here this morning.

25 YEARS AGO: OCTOBER 2000

Rao, Buta get 3 years' RI

New Delhi, Oct 12
Former Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao will go down in history for suffering the humiliation of being convicted and sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment in the JMM MPs' bribery case along with his former Cabinet colleague Buta Singh. Pronouncing the sentence in his jam-packed high security court room in Vigyan Bhawan here, Special Judge Ajit Bharihoke imposed a fine of Rs 2 lakh each and granted them bail on a personal bond of Rs 2 lakh and a surety of same amount and kept the sentence suspended till November 8.

OASIS | PRASANNA S HARIHAR

Finding comfort in the unknown

Human tendency is to slip into a comfort zone. There is a famous saying, 'familiarity breeds contempt', while another goes, 'familiarity breeds comfort'. We get good sleep in our own bed, head against the same pillow, covered with the same blanket, even when they cry for a good wash.

The experience of palpitations as one heads to an unknown place is well known. The fear of the unknown takes over our senses as we carry items described above for better comfort. There are individuals who find it difficult to sleep when in unfamiliar environments without their usual comforts.

What does it take to let go of the known comforts? The known is known to cause attachment to the extent that it becomes overbearing. We realise we are attached to inanimate things like our car, home, a favourite sweet, or farmhouse. A question can then arise in one's mind about how one should view the attachment towards one's family and a pet animal.

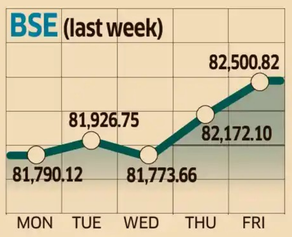
Vedanta asks us to analyse our own day-to-day experience wherein when we go to sleep, we become detached from everything, including our own body. The proof point is that any physical pain is not felt as a 'suffering' in our deep sleep. Our own 'always attached' mobile phone lies next to the bed without us even being aware of its existence during our sleep.

Eventually at the end of this mortal journey we must let go of everything. The thought that this journey's end can be at any moment should be our mindset. A series of this single thought will be an affirmation to let go of the known comforts and to seek the unknown.

Shastras tell us that the so-called unknown is our own True Self, unfortunately covered by our own mental ignorance. It is the most obvious when these layers of ignorance are removed through inquiry, at which point the 'most unknown' becomes the 'most known'. It is our own consciousness that we must yearn to know by investing sufficient time and effort.

The "Unknown" realised as "Known" is indeed the eternal truth, which has stood the test of time. We need to embrace it with open arms, knowing which, the Mundaka Upanishad says, we do not have to know anything else to make it known in this ephemeral world!

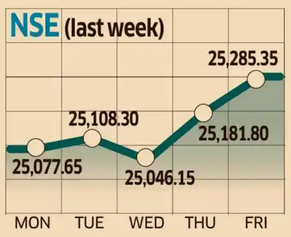
BSE (last week)



*Data as of Oct 10

TOP GAINERS		TOP LOSERS	
HCL TECH	7.28%	TATA MOTORS	-5.16%
ETERNAL	6.06%	TRENT	-2.60%
INFY	4.68%	ASIAN PAINTS	-0.76%
TCS	4.35%	ADANI PORTS	-0.70%
TECH M	4.03%	NTPC	-0.70%

NSE (last week)



TOP GAINERS		TOP LOSERS	
HCL TECH	7.32%	TATA MOTORS	-5.19%
ETERNAL	6.04%	TRENT	-2.59%
INFOSYS L	4.72%	HDFC LIFE INS	-1.57%
TCS	4.36%	ADANI ENT	-1.51%
TECH M	4.04%	TATA CONSUM	-0.97%

Sensex (52-week)

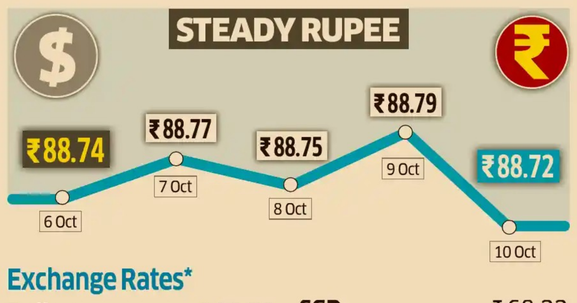
Oct 10, 2024	Oct 10, 2025	
81,538.94	82,500.82	1.18%

Nifty (52-week)

Oct 10, 2024	Oct 10, 2025	
24,998.45	25,285.35	1.15%

10-year Bond yield 6.53%

STEADY RUPEE



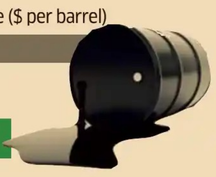
Exchange Rates*

Dollar	₹88.72	SGD	₹68.22
Pound	₹118.01	Yen (100 units)	₹58.02
Euro	₹102.62		

*Price at which banks sell

Crude Oil Rate ($ per barrel)

BRENT CRUDE
$62.73*
-3.82%



*Rate as of Oct 11

Bengaluru fuel pump price*

(Retail)
Petrol* ₹102.98 ₹0.06% ▲
Diesel* ₹91.04 ₹0.05% ▲

*Rates as of Oct 11 #Rate change compared with yesterday

Commodity watch

COFFEE

Category	Rate (Rs per 50 kg)*
Arabica Parchment	₹26500 - 27000
Arabica Cherry	₹14000 - 16000
Robusta Parchment	₹16750 - 17250
Robusta Cherry	₹11150 - 12000

*Rates as on Oct 10

Other Commodities

Silkworm cocoon (Rs per kg)*

Bivoltine (BV)	₹679
Cross Breed (CB)	₹579

*Average rates as on Oct 10

Karnataka cashew industry turns 100 amid mass closures

Steep stamp duty, unscientific APMC cess contribute to shut downs

HARSHA
MANGALURU, DHNS

As the Karnataka Cashew Manufacturers Association (KCMA) is gearing up to celebrate the centennial year of the opening of the state's first cashew processing unit in November this year, there is not much to cheer about.

The 70-year-old KCMA, which began in 1955 with seven cashew processing units, boasted over 400 members a decade ago. Today, that number has dropped to 250 as many units were forced to shut down due to mounting financial and operational challenges. While there is no exact data available, sources at the District Industries Centre (DIC) confirm that over 100 cashew processing units in three coastal districts have ceased their operations.

A sector under crisis

KCMA President S Anantha Krishna Rao acknowledges that the crisis continues to plague the cashew sector.

Agricultural economist Vigneshwar Varmudi identifies multiple reasons crippling the cashew processing industry: acute shortage of skilled women labourers, increase in the cost of production, age-old machinery, fluctuations in prices of raw cashew, and illegal import of cashew among others.

"The steep stamp duty, unscientific APMC cess, lack of warehouse facility for cashews had contributed to shutting down of cashew industries," Rao explained.

Rising NPAs

According to Santhosh D'Silva, former president of KCMA, most cashew industries were locked up after they were declared as non-performing assets (NPAs) for defaulting on loan repayments by banks under SARFAESI Act.

Cashew nut processing plant.

H Sudhir Nayak of Vinayaka Exports recollected that the centre had facilitated in releasing Guaranteed Emergency Credit line (GECL) 1.0, GECL 2.0 and GECL 3.0 loans to help cashew processing units restart their business which had been hit by Covid-19 pandemic.

"Due to Covid-19 crisis, prices of cashew had dropped from Rs 600 per kg to Rs 400," Sudhir recollected. During this transition period many labour-intensive units switched over to mechanisation. "As the loan interest was high, the operations were commercially not viable resulting in the shutting down of my cashew processing unit in Hebri. My company started in 1978 had employed over 450 employees and contributed substantially to the local economy," Sudhir recollected nostalgically.

G Giridhar Prabhu, former Vice Chairman of Cashew Export Promotion Council of India, said the Supreme Court in its order had declared that SARFAESI law is `anomalous and requires correction'. Yet banks bound by RBI rules take possession of cashew units under SARFAESI Act, he added.

All India Cashew Association (AICA) President Bola Rahul Kamath told *DH* that he had led many delegations to the Union Minister of Finance. "Our pleas on extending the loan repayment period in order to revive defunct units had not received any response so far," he said.

Industry-wide impact

The crisis is not limited to Karnataka alone. Kamath explains that cashew factories across the country including Kollam district in Kerala, which has the highest number of cashew processing units, are struggling to stay afloat.

The crisis in the cashew sector is akin to the rice mill crisis a decade ago. The bigger industries incorporated technology and expanded, while the smaller rice mills which failed to expand perished. Rahul claimed that there was no reduction in quantities of import (raw cashew nut) or export (processed cashew kernels) as the bigger units have increased their capacities. The crisis in the cashew sector has had an impact on import and export of cashew kernels -- which earns valuable foreign exchange of about Rs 4,000 crore per annum.

According to statistics compiled by DGCIS (Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics) import of raw cashew nuts (RCN) which was 1.25 million metric tonnes in 2023-24 had dropped to 1.14 million metric tonnes in 2024-25. The export of cashew kernels witnessed a marginal drop from 65,801 metric tonnes in 2023-24 to 65,234 metric tonnes in 2024-25.

RCN imported via New Mangalore Port (NMP) was 43,236 metric tonnes in August 2025. During the corresponding period in the previous year, it was 45,133 metric tonnes. Cashew kernels exported via NMP were 323 metric tonnes in August 2025. During the corresponding period in the previous year, it was 761 metric tonnes.

Path to revival

The first cashew processing unit in the country was set up in Mangaluru by Pierce Leslie and company, according to studies. Prabhu says cashew, a horticulture crop, should be declared as a plantation crop. As the present concept is 'farm to mouth,' APMC fee should not be levied at all.

"State governments should have a separate exit policy where an industrial unit can declare closure and this closure will free resources, land, labour and capital. Banks should allow the entrepreneur to manage the default better and help exit by encouraging mergers, acquisitions or takeovers," Prabhu said.

As the industry marks a century of cashew processing, stakeholders hope these proposed reforms will help revive a sector that once thrived but now faces an uncertain future.

ICAI to support in training homegrown AI on tax, finance issues

India targets to rollout indigenous LLM in February

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

ICAI President Charanjot Singh Nanda

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) has said that it will provide critical inputs and support in the development of India's homegrown Large Language Model (LLM) artificial intelligence, which is expected to be rolled out in February next year.

The accounting body is in discussions with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) to provide input based on the analysis of data of the listed companies.

Speaking at a media residential meet in Goa, ICAI President CA Charanjot Singh Nanda said the ICAI has been at the forefront of adopting the new technology in accounting and financial fraud detection.

The Indian accounting body has made artificial intelligence (AI) a part of its curriculum and training programmes. All students passing the Chartered Accountancy final examination from 2027 onwards will be trained in using artificial intelligence. The institute has also taken initiatives to train its existing members to train in AI.

Electronics and IT Secretary S Krishnan recently announced that India's indigenous LLM would be launched in February. LLM is a type of artificial intelligence system trained on vast amounts of data to understand and generate human-like language.

The ICAI's input in the development of LLM would play a critical role in training the system on the issues related to Indian taxation and financial matters. It will also help in detecting and preventing financial frauds.

Individuals and firms in India suffered around Rs 25,000 crore losses in 2024 due to financial frauds. There have been growing instances of financial frauds in recent years in different forms including digital arrests, account hacking and OTP frauds. According to the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre, the losses due to financial frauds are estimated to jump multi-fold in the coming years.

A top ICAI functionary claimed that the initiatives taken by the accountancy body could help prevent a substantial number of financial frauds and reduce the losses by upto 25%.

Nanda said the ICAI has been pushing for the use of technologically advanced accounting practices. "We encourage the use of cloud accounting, machine learning and Blockchain for transparency," he said.

The ICAI is collaborating with leading global accounting bodies and educational institutions to push forward financial awareness and raise accounting standards.

Several accounting bodies and governments have shown keenness to use the forensic standards developed by the ICAI. "Our vision is to have 3 million highly skilled CAs to meet the growing demands of the global economy," Nanda said.

He claimed that several governments and accounting bodies have shown readiness to pay royalties for the use of ICAI forensic standards. The ICAI is also working on an international curriculum to enable Indian students to understand global compliance and regulatory frameworks. It has selected Mauritius and Ethiopia for the initial phase of syllabus mapping. The more countries will follow, an ICAI functionary said.

ED offers Flipkart to close FEMA violation case by paying penalty, admitting mistake

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) is learnt to have offered the option of closing a FEMA violation case against e-commerce major Flipkart if the Walmart group firm admits its mistake and pays a penalty, sources aware of the development said.

The option was given by the Enforcement Directorate to Flipkart last week under the compounding rules of FEMA (Foreign Exchange Management Act).

"ED has given the option of compounding to Flipkart. ED has asked Flipkart to admit its mistake, pay a penalty and dismantle the seller network associated with it," a source told PTI. An email query sent to Flipkart elicited no reply.

The ED had also summoned Amazon India to check the status of the company. When contacted, an Amazon India spokesperson said, "We do not comment on ongoing investigations. A query sent to ED in this matter also received no response.

An official of one of the e-commerce firms, on condition of anonymity, said that the compounding option given by ED is to strengthen India's negotiating power during the ongoing bilateral trade negotiation with the US. The compounding rules allow companies to voluntarily admit breach of the provision under the FEMA and settle the case by paying a penalty for the contraventions.

Puravankara to launch projects with GDV of Rs 18,000 cr

MAHESH KULKARNI
BENGALURU, DHNS

Bengaluru-based real estate developer Puravankara is planning to launch new residential projects spread over 15 million square feet (msg) with a gross development value (GDV) of Rs 18,000 crore over the next 12 to 18 months. With this the total GDV of its new projects under development will touch Rs 45,000 crore.

According to Mallanna Sasalu, CEO-South, Puravankara Ltd said the company is currently developing projects worth Rs 27,700 crore across residential, and commercial properties. Of this, it has already completed and sold properties worth Rs 9,700 crore and the balance Rs 18,000 crore worth of projects are in various stages of completion.

"Puravanakara completed blemishless 50 years recently and laid a strong foundation over this period. We want to continue the same values and grow faster and bigger in the coming years. We are going aggressively in Mumbai with the redevelopment and greenfield projects in Pune and other 7 cities in the South," Mallanna told *DH*.

He said the company is exploring options to buy more land in various cities it is present right now and consolidate its presence as a Grade A developer. It is looking to acquire 9-10 msf land across 7 cities, he said.

The company is currently developing 3 msf of commercial properties (Purva Aerocity and Purva Zentech) in Bengaluru and over the next year complete 1.2 msf. The total area under development is about 51 msf across both residential and commercial properties. It is currently developing 30 projects spread over 24.44 msf across Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Kochi, Pune, and Goa. Over the next 18 months, it plans to launch residential projects spread over 15 msf, Mallanna said.

"While the real estate industry is growing at 9-10% annually, we want to grow much faster with higher margins and efficient delivery," he said.

For the second quarter ended September 2025, Puravankara reported pre-sales of Rs 1,322 crore, marking a 4% year-on-year growth. The average price realisation improved by 7% year-on-year, while customer collections for the quarter grew by 8% to Rs 1,047 crore.

"During the first half of FY26, we made significant progress in expanding our portfolio, adding over 6.36 msf of potential developable area with an estimated GDV of approximately Rs 9,100 crore. These include marquee acquisitions across Mumbai and Bengaluru, such as Malabar Hill and Chembur redevelopment projects, and large-scale partnerships in North and East Bengaluru," said Ashish Puravankara, Managing Director, Puravankara Limited.

DH INTERVIEW

'Future of enterprise AI is in building custom solutions with LLMs'

Agentic workflows are redefining how organisations use data. Bozeman, Montana headquartered cloud data storage company - Snowflake Inc, which has completed five years in India, is striving to democratise artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) workflows, break down data silos, and accelerate the adoption of AI across various use cases within the enterprise. It is on track to grow to over 700 employees in India by the end of this year. Speaking to *DH's* **Uma Kannan**, **Vijayant Rai**, managing director- India, Snowflake, said that the future of enterprise AI is in building custom solutions with large language models (LLMs) like chatbots, AI apps and agents so as to meet unique business needs and solve real problems.

Edited excerpts:

What kind of growth opportunities are you seeing in the Indian market?

India is a crucial growth engine for Snowflake's global strategy, particularly given its vast and expanding data market. AI is projected to add $1 trillion to the economy by 2035, with a corresponding need for one million AI professionals by 2026. Over the past five years, Snowflake has established a strong presence in the Indian market. We've grown our presence significantly, expanding our teams across business and various functions, opening new offices in Mumbai and Bengaluru, and continuing growth in our Pune Centre of Excellence. We have seen strong adoption of our platform with customers like IndiGo, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, Razorpay and Shiprocket, among others.

How is AI transforming different sectors?

We believe flashy models won't define the future of enterprise AI; it will be defined by those companies with a strong data foundation. Data is the fuel for AI, and AI is only as powerful as the data it is built on. Adoption of our AI product capabilities is growing fast, with globally over 6,100 customers using them on a weekly basis, including some customers in India. We are also witnessing customers across BFSI, Retail & CPG, and Manufacturing move from POCs (proof of concepts) to production with AI. We are continuing to advance our leadership in enterprise AI. We have embedded AI across the data lifecycle to accelerate analytics, transform workflows, and even power migrations.

What future advancements do you foresee in AI?

The future of enterprise AI is in building custom solutions with LLMs — like chatbots, AI apps, and agents — to meet unique business needs and solve real problems. That's why we host a plethora of models in Cortex AI to ensure our customers have a choice and flexibility to select the models that work best for them. We also believe agentic AI represents a massive opportunity to transform how people interact with data. Agentic AI is the death of the static dashboard. It marks the beginning of a true conversation for organisations with their business and data. For years, BI (business intelligence) tools could tell enterprises what happened. Agentic AI, powered by a solid data foundation, can now tell enterprises why it happened and help them decide what to do next. It's about moving from passive reports to active, intelligent decision-making. But agents are only as good as the data they can access. An agent without governed, high-quality data is just a toy.

How are you ensuring security and governance over the data and models used by companies?

We embed protection throughout the data and AI lifecycle—from ingestion to transformation to deployment—ensuring that data never leaves the secure environment where it resides. Snowflake Cortex Guard safeguards LLM pipelines by monitoring inputs and outputs to prevent the processing of harmful or sensitive content, ensuring AI remains safe, compliant, and trustworthy. At the same time, Snowflake Horizon, our unified governance layer, brings together compliance, privacy, interoperability, and access into a single framework—allowing organisations to govern and act on data, applications, and models across clouds, partners, and teams.

Going forward, what is your revenue target?

India is our fastest-growing market in the APJ (Asia-Pacific and Japan) region. Over the past five years, we have built a strong foundation here. Globally, in Q2 (quarter ended July 31, 2025), we reported product revenue of $1.09 billion, up 32% year-over-year, with a net revenue retention rate of 125%. We now have 654 customers contributing more than $1 million in trailing 12-month product revenue and serve 751 Forbes Global 2000 companies. In APJ, which includes India, we delivered $64.4 million in product revenue, growing 52.3% y-o-y, alongside a 25% increase in our customer base to 1,809. Snowflake continues to see healthy revenue growth, strong retention, and record enterprise adoption, with 50 customers crossing the $1 million mark in the last quarter alone. Looking ahead, we are raising our FY26 guidance, expecting $4.39 billion in product revenue, representing 27% y-o-y growth, as we continue to invest strategically for scale.

TOP PICKS

The data is sourced from Motilal Oswal Financial Services Limited

Delhivery
(ID: DELHIVERY)
BUY
Upside +16%**
Last close ₹465
Target: ₹540*

PN Gadgil
(ID: PNGJL)
BUY
Upside +24%**
Last close ₹665
Target: ₹825*

Max Financial Services
(ID: MFSL)
BUY
Upside +10%**
Last close ₹1,584
Target: ₹1,750*

Dalmia Bharat
(ID: DALMIABHA)
BUY
Upside +19%**
Last close ₹2,228
Target: ₹2,660*

Swiggy
(ID: SWIGGY)
BUY
Upside +29%**
Last close ₹435
Target: ₹560*

* Target price has been calculated on the basis of fundamentals ** Upside refers to more value stock is expected to generate than its current price

Why investors can't ignore global diversification

ARIHANT BARDIA
CIO AND FOUNDER
VALTRUST

Every few months, the Indian rupee is back in the news, and usually for the wrong reasons. On September 4, 2025, it closed at 88.14 against the US dollar, having briefly recovered to 88.02 from an all-time low the day before. The decline was triggered by persistent foreign fund outflows, US tariffs announcement, and the new GST rates (which provided only limited relief). What makes this decline more apparent is that it occurs at a time when the US dollar index is falling globally, indicating that the rupee's weakness is rooted in fundamental, India-specific constraints.

For Indian investors, this could be a reminder that keeping one's entire wealth in rupee-denominated assets could expose portfolios to a risk that is often underestimated—currency depreciation. Each time the rupee weakens, healthcare, travel, overseas education, and even investments become more expensive. The erosion of purchasing power is real, and it quietly chips away at wealth over time. So, the best move for an investor here is diversification, across geographies, asset classes, and currencies.

A global allocation protects against rupee weakness. It opens doors to innovation-led themes that India cannot yet replicate at scale. Consider sectors such as artificial intelligence, electric vehicles, biotechnology, or global technology platforms—areas where the US and other developed countries are the true hubs. Investing internationally is, therefore, is both a defensive hedge and an offensive strategy, where investors participate in growth engines shaping the future economy.

It also reduces concentration risk. India remains an attractive investment destination, but it is still an emerging market with its own set of vulnerabilities, which includes policy shifts, regulatory unpredictability, and geopolitical exposures. Having exposure across geographies smooths returns during India-specific downturns, creating a more resilient portfolio.

Despite recent regulatory tightening under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS), high-net-worth investors still have meaningful avenues to access global assets. Ultra HNIs and family offices often invest out of their companies / LLPs LRS limits are restrictive.

With U.S. rates at multi-year highs, one-year treasury bills currently yield around 4.5% in USD terms. For investors with surplus liquidity, this is a compelling short-term parking option that also provides dollar exposure.

But fixed income is just one end of the spectrum; equity and alternative products expand the opportunity set even further. Many of the world's most dominant businesses, Apple, Nvidia, Microsoft, Google, are absent from Indian exchanges. These companies represent scale, innovation, and durable growth that domestic markets do not offer. A bouquet of international alternate products is available to cater to most needs. There are funds targeting absolute returns which are less correlated to market direction and structured efficiently from a taxation point of view, making them attractive diversifiers. Then there are strategies such as litigation financing and life settlement funds that provide independently generated income streams and decrease portfolio reliance on both equity and interest rate cycles.

Each of these avenues have its own risk-return trade-offs, but they all exemplify the wide range of opportunities that international diversification can offer.

From a generational standpoint, many long-term family needs are paid for in dollars or foreign currencies for things like international medical care, education abroad, moving to other countries, and even estate planning. By holding a portion of wealth internationally, families can ensure that their purchasing power is preserved across decades, rather than being eroded by the vagaries of Rupee depreciation.

None of this is to suggest that India is not investable. Quite the opposite, in fact. India is undergoing a historic transformation, and the opportunities domestically are immense. But transformation also brings volatility, regulatory changes, and periods of disruption. The prudent response is not to retreat from India but to ensure that one's portfolio has a global dimension to withstand shocks and capture opportunities abroad.

In a world where capital flows seamlessly across borders, the true risk is not volatility, but keeping all your wealth confined to a single currency.

Mcap of eight of10 most valued firms jumps by Rs 1.94 L cr

NEW DELHI, PTI: The combined market valuation of eight of the top-10 most valued firms jumped by Rs 1,94,148.73 crore last week, with TCS emerging as the biggest gainer, in line with an optimistic trend at the Dalal Street.

Last week, the BSE benchmark surged 1,293.65 points or 1.59%.

While Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Bajaj Finance and Infosys were the gainers from the top-10 pack, Hindustan Unilever and Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) faced erosion from their market valuation.

TCS added Rs 45,678.35 crore taking its market valuation to Rs 10,95,701.62 crore.

The valuation of Infosys jumped Rs 28,125.29 crore to Rs 6,29,080.22 crore and that of HDFC Bank surged Rs 25,135.62 crore to Rs 15,07,025.19 crore.

Bharti Airtel's market valuation zoomed Rs 25,089.27 crore to Rs 11,05,980.35 crore.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of Reliance Industries climbed Rs 25,035.08 crore to Rs 18,70,120.06 crore.

The mcap of Bajaj Finance rallied Rs 21,187.56 crore to Rs 6,36,995.74 crore and that of State Bank of India edged higher by Rs 12,645.94 crore to Rs 8,12,986.64 crore.

The valuation of ICICI Bank went up by Rs 11,251.62 crore to Rs 9,86,367.47 crore.

'Easing NRI investing in Indian markets urgent goal for Sebi'

MUMBAI, PTI: Sebi chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey on Saturday said easing the process to help the Indian diaspora invest in the Indian markets is an "urgent goal" for the capital markets regulator.

The watchdog is looking at simplifying ways in such a way that the non-resident Indians (NRI) do not have to travel to their home country for complying with the know your customer (KYC) requirements.

"We are yet to establish an easy and secure KYC access for NRIs to facilitate their participation in the securities market. This will be an urgent goal for us," Pandey said, speaking at an event organised by the Bombay Stock Exchange Brokers' Forum here.

The career bureaucrat-turned-regulator said Sebi is in touch with the RBI and also the Unique Identification Authority of India to create a system where NRIs' KYC can happen without someone being forced to travel to India. As per reports, there are over 3.5 crore NRIs, and India was the biggest remittance beneficiary in the world having received USD 135 billion in FY25.

The comments come at a time when there has been some waning in the domestic retail investor interest to bet on Indian equities as seen in declining trend in SIP investments.

Meanwhile, having decided to create a single window for trusted foreign portfolio investors and lighter compliance in September, Pandey said Sebi's "immediate goal" is to create the entire FPI registration simple and fast by making it portal-based.

"We are already consulting our stakeholders to implement it," he added.

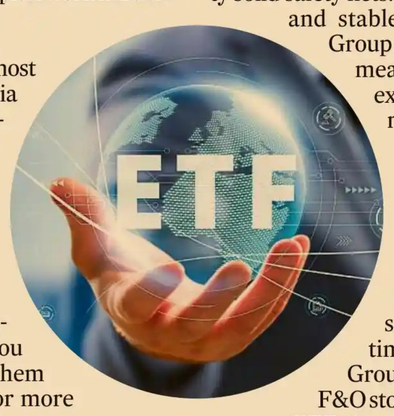
Why margin trading on ETFs is a strategic shift

We're looking at potentially increased liquidity and a lot more flexibility

DHIRAJ RELLI

India's stock market has been on a wild ride of innovation lately, and one of the most interesting developments that might have flown under your radar is the introduction of margin trading on exchange traded funds (ETFs) back in December 2022. At first glance, it might have seemed like just another regulatory tweak, but it actually is a pretty big deal. It's fundamentally changing how investors like you can get broad market exposure while making your capital work harder.

From zero to hero



Think about it: For almost 20 years, ETFs in India were pretty much limited to a simple "buy and hold" strategy. They lacked the leverage options you see in more developed markets. Basically, they were passive investment vehicles, which meant you couldn't really use them for tactical trading or more sophisticated portfolio moves.

Then, in November 2022, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) dropped a game-changing circular, which went live on December 29, 2022. This wasn't a spur-of-the-moment decision; it came after a lot of discussion by the Secondary Market Advisory Committee. The goal? To bring India in line with global best practices and allow certain highly liquid and stable equity ETFs (dubbed "Group I") to be traded on margin. This opened a whole new world for Indian investors.

The growth story

The ETF market in India has exploded, according to data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI). As of June 2025, assets under management (AUM) in ETFs have soared to approximately Rs. 9.24 trillion, a fourfold increase from approximately Rs. 1.86 trillion in June 2020. That's huge! But even with all that growth, ETFs were missing a key ingredient: the dynamic trading that margin facilities can unlock. This is especially true for active traders and bigger institutional players. Now, with margin trading in the mix, we're looking at potentially increased liquidity and a lot more flexibility.

The regulatory angle

Now, before you get too excited and start thinking about turbocharging your portfolio, it's important to know that this isn't a free-for-all. The margin trading framework is designed with some pretty solid safety nets. Only the most liquid and stable ETFs (remember, Group I) are eligible, which means leverage is being extended carefully. The margin requirements are set at VaR (Value at Risk) plus three times the applicable Extreme Loss Margin (ELM) for Group I stocks available for trading in the F&O segment, and VaR + 5 times applicable ELM Group I stocks other than F&O stocks and units of Equity ETFs (applicable VaR and ELM shall be as in the cash segment for a particular stock). It's a conservative approach that tries to strike a balance between risk and opportunity.

But, here's a cool bonus: ETFs can now be both traded on margin and used as collateral. This gives both retail and institutional investors a lot more flexibility in how they manage their portfolios.

The ups and downs

It's been nearly three years since this all started, and we're seeing some encouraging progress. But let's be real, it's not all sunshine and rainbows. One of the biggest challenges is liquidity. The bid-ask spreads (the difference between the highest price a buyer is willing to pay and the lowest price a seller is willing to accept) can average around 17 basis points for even the largest ETFs. This can make leveraged strategies less attractive. Also, the operational infrastructure, especially the auto-pledging and collateral management systems, have only recently matured. We've seen some major upgrades as recently as February 2025, and these improvements are crucial for making ETF margin trading accessible and user-friendly for everyone.

The big picture

The introduction of ETF margin trading shows that India is serious about making its market more sophisticated. In developed markets, leverage on ETFs has been a game-changer, boosting liquidity, tightening spreads, and making complex strategies possible.

For institutional investors, margin-enabled ETFs make it easier to adjust asset allocation without the hassle of building individual stock positions. For retail investors, they offer a diversified way to use leverage, which can reduce the risks of concentrating on single stocks while still enjoying the benefits of leverage.

With so many new demat accounts (over 20 crore as per recent data) and the growing popularity of systematic investment plans (SIPs), offering structured leverage through ETFs aligns perfectly with the trend of Indians investing more in the financial markets.

What's next?

Sebi is already reviewing the margin trading framework (they announced this in August 2025), which shows they're committed to making it even better. As we gain more experience, we expect to see refinements in the eligibility criteria and risk management measures.

The market is also showing strong growth. The margin trading segment has jumped from Rs. 50,000 crores in March 2024 to peaks of Rs. 96,000 crore, which tells us that investors are definitely interested. As ETF liquidity improves and the infrastructure gets even stronger, margin trading on ETFs is set to become a major part of leveraged investing in India.

The bottom line

The journey from regulatory approval to widespread adoption is going to take time, but the future looks promising. The liquidity issues and operational hurdles are temporary and should fade as the market matures.

For investors, the key is to use leverage wisely. Remember that ETFs offer diversification, but leverage always comes with risks that you need to manage carefully. The real advantage here is the ability to diversify your leveraged positions, and that's a powerful tool in the right hands.

(The writer is MD & CEO of HDFC Securities)

THE WEEK AHEAD

Markets' incline to sustain, FIIs also back

Govt efforts at stimulating the economy paying off

SIDDHARTHA KHEMKA

This week, equities are likely to trade with a positive bias as the Q2FY26 earnings season gathers momentum, aided by a dovish monetary backdrop, easing crude prices, resilient festive demand and foreign institutional investors (FIIs) turning buyers over the last few sessions.

Earnings season began on October 9 with TCS declaring its results. Next week, several technology and financial companies are scheduled to announce theirs, with business updates from the financial space so far being positive. On the global front, investors have digested the US Federal Reserve's minutes and now await the US CPI, PPI, and unemployment data for further clarity on policy direction.

In the previous week, Nifty50 ended higher amid improving global sentiment, supported by easing geopolitical tensions as Israel and Hamas agreed on the first stage of a ceasefire plan, along with signs of progress in a potential India–US trade deal. The index gained 1.6% to close at 25,285, while the Nifty Midcap 100 and Nifty Smallcap 100 rose 2.1% and 1.4%, respectively. Gains were broad-based, led by IT, pharma, banking, and realty.

Pharmaceutical stocks remained in focus after the U.S. government refrained from imposing tariffs on imported generics, easing supply-side concerns for Indian exporters. Foreign flows improved, with FIIs turning net buyers in the last three sessions (₹ 3,000 crore), while domestic institutional investors (DIIs) added ₹ 1,600 crore, cushioning early-week volatility.

Nifty earnings are expected to grow around 6% YoY in 2QFY26, driven by oil & gas, NBFC lending, telecom, metals, cement, capital goods, and healthcare. Domestically, India appears to be entering a new phase of structural growth, underpinned by a shift in consumption from needs-based to aspirational and experience-led spending.

As consumption momentum strengthens in Q3FY26, a meaningful revival in the private capex cycle is likely, marking the start of a broader investment upturn. Early signs are evident across power T&D, telecom, oil & gas, defence, and airlines, where capacity expansion is underway to capture emerging demand.

Banking and NBFCs reported healthy business updates, highlighting steady credit growth, stable asset quality, and improving deposit traction. Together with benign funding costs, the RBI's reforms—clarity on regulatory overlaps, lower risk weights for MSME and housing loans, and a phased ECL migration from April 2027—reinforce earnings visibility and strengthen the sector's medium-term outlook.

Meanwhile, auto and consumer-discretionary segments are positioned for a strong festive quarter. Navratri auto industry data indicated record passenger-vehicle retail sales, up 34% YoY, underscoring robust festive demand. September wholesales were modestly higher across two-wheeler and passenger-vehicle categories, while tractor volumes surged on the back of the best monsoon in five years (+8% above LPA). Supported by GST rate cuts and strong rural sentiment, the sector is well-placed to deliver a strong near-term performance.

We believe that the government remains committed to lifting and stimulating the Indian economy despite frosty global headwinds. Proactive policy initiatives, supported by the RBI's accommodative stance, have already set in motion a cycle of structural growth and improving corporate profitability. These recent trade partnerships, along with the ongoing earnings season, are expected to drive market direction in the near term. We expect corporate profit growth for Nifty constituents to sustain double-digit momentum through FY27, underpinned by stable macros, policy continuity, and earnings resilience.

(The writer is Head of Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd)

DH REVIEW

Google Pixel 10 Pro Fold: Premium with versatile AI features

ROHIT KVN
BENGALURU, DHNS

Last week, Google launched the Pixel 10 Pro Fold, the company's most expensive (Rs 1,72,999) phone in India. Compared to the predecessor, it features a faster Tensor G5 processor, a larger battery, improved durability, and several new AI-centric upgrades. Here are my thoughts on the latest premium Android handset.

Design and display

The Pixel 10 Pro Fold sports a notebook-style design, refined with slimmer bezels and a sturdier, compared to the predecessor. It has a gearless hinge made of multi-alloy steel and aerospace-grade aluminium. It is IP68-rated, the first for a foldable Pixel, and can survive submersion up to 1.5 metres for 30 minutes.

The cover display and back are shielded by Gorilla Glass Victus 2, while the inner foldable 8.0-inch screen is protected by ultra-thin glass.

The outer 6.4-inch full HD+ Actua OLED panel (3,000 nits) is bright and smooth thanks to a 120Hz refresh rate, though slightly bulky for single-handed use. Inside, the 8.0-inch QHD+ Super Actua Flex OLED LTPO display (1–120Hz) shines for multitasking and media, with Android 16's split-screen optimisation features enhancing productivity. The lack of an anti-reflective coating means that outdoor visibility requires the user to hold the phone closer to their face.

Performance

Available in 16GB RAM and 256GB storage configuration, the Pixel 10 Pro Fold runs on Google's Tensor G5, a 3nm octa-core chip co-designed with DeepMind for advanced on-device LLM tasks. It delivers smooth performance, 34% faster CPU speeds, and over 60% improved TPU processing. Android 16 with Material-3 Expressive UI is optimised for foldable use, supporting drag-and-drop, dynamic multitasking and more.

AI features include Pixel Studio for generative media, Gemini chatbot, AI live translations, Camera Coach, Pixel Screenshots, Writing Tools, and the Journal app. Magic Cue offers contextual data (linked to Google's core apps) while messaging, but it has limited use in India since most users rely on WhatsApp or Telegram. The Camera Share feature in Gemini Live can help users with Do-It-Yourself projects at home.

The device supports new gaming features like split-screen play for select titles, but not suited for extreme gaming.

Tenson G5 is paired with Titan M2 security to safeguard sensitive data in the phone. The device will get seven years of Android OS and security updates. Safety features include Crash Detection, natural disaster alerts, and Pixel Satellite SOS (not yet in India). Connectivity includes Wi-Fi 7, Bluetooth 6.0, 5G nano-SIM and eSIM.

Battery

With a 5,015mAh battery, it can easily last a full day under normal usage with Wi-Fi. But it drains a bit faster on 5G during heavy multimedia use. It supports 23W wired and 15W Qi2 Pixelsnap wireless charging, a first for Pixel phones.

Photography

The triple camera setup features a 48MP main sensor, 10.5MP ultra-wide, and 10.8MP 5x telephoto. It delivers excellent daylight and low-light shots.

It supports Super Res Zoom, which can reach up to 20x. It can record 4K video up to 60fps, and the quality is crisp. Both the 10MP cameras on the cover display and inner screen can handle selfies and 4K video well.

Google's computational tools like Magic Editor, Audio Eraser, and Veo 3-powered animations enhance the photography experience. The Camera Coach, which debuts with the Pixel 10 series, is a very handy feature for beginners with framing and composition of the photos.

Verdict

The Pixel 10 Pro Fold impresses with a sturdy design, rich AI features, smooth multitasking, and outstanding photography.

However, like all foldable phones in the market, the expensive price tag keeps it out of reach for most customers in India.

'We have other means': Afghan minister warns Pakistan from India

Says will not tolerate external aggression, violation of sovereignty

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Afghanistan's Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi addresses a press conference in New Delhi. AFP

Afghanistan will unitedly and firmly resist any aggression by Pakistan and safeguard its sovereignty, the Taliban-ruled nation's Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi said in New Delhi on Sunday. His remarks came amid heightened tensions following a cross-border military flare-up along the Durand Line, Afghanistan's border with Pakistan.

"The policy of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan is to resolve all issues through dialogue and understanding. We want zero tension, but if they do not want that, then Afghanistan has other means," Muttaqi said, issuing a stern warning to Pakistan from Indian soil.

Muttaqi, on a visit to India since Thursday, was addressing his second press conference in New Delhi. His first press conference on Friday sparked controversy after only male journalists were invited. However, women journalists were invited to attend his second media interaction.

Islamabad has accused the Taliban regime in Afghanistan of sheltering Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) militants, blaming the group for a series of attacks in Pakistan. Kabul has rejected the allegation.

Muttaqi arrived in India after the United Nations Security Council granted him a temporary exemption from the travel ban, asset freeze and arms embargo imposed on him and other Taliban leaders. He is the first senior Afghan Taliban figure to be publicly hosted by India. His meeting with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar marked India's highest-level engagement with the Taliban in 25 years.

Pakistan responded to the latest engagement between the Taliban government and India by launching aerial strikes on Kabul and on a market in Afghanistan's Paktika province.

"Afghanistan will safeguard its territory and airspace. There have been violations, and we responded immediately. If some people are unwilling to resolve this issue peacefully, Afghanistan has the capacity to defend its sovereignty," said Muttaqi.

33L students enrolled in over 1 lakh single-teacher schools

NEW DELHI, PTI: Over 33 lakh students across the country are enrolled in more than 1 lakh single-teacher schools, with Andhra Pradesh recording the highest number of such schools and Uttar Pradesh leading with the most number of student enrolments in them, according to official data.

According to the Ministry of Education's statistics, in the academic year 2024-25, there were 1,04,125 schools in India run by a single teacher each, and such schools catered to 33,76,769 students, an average of 34 students per school.

The Right to Education Act, 2009, mandates a pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) of 30:1 at the primary level (classes I-V) and 35:1 at the upper primary level (classes VI-VIII).

The highest number of "single-teacher" schools in the country are in Andhra Pradesh, followed by UP, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, and Karnataka. However, when it comes to student enrolment in schools with a single teacher, UP tops the list, followed by Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Madhya Pradesh.

The number of single-teacher schools has decreased by around 6% from 1,18,190 in 2022–23 to 1,10,971 in 2023–24.

"Single-teacher schools hinder the teaching-learning process, and hence efforts are being made to redeploy teachers from schools with zero student enrolment to single-teacher schools to ensure optimal teacher availability," a senior official explained.

Infiltration risk rises as Pak rebuilds terror camps

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS

India's security agencies are keeping a close watch along the Line of Control as Pakistan reportedly rebuilds terrorist camps destroyed during Operation Sindoor in May.

The developments highlight the continuing threat of militancy in Jammu and Kashmir, decades after the insurgency first erupted in 1989.

Sources said the rebuilt camps, located in Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir (PoK) and adjoining areas, are smaller and technologically advanced, designed to evade surveillance and survive airstrikes.

Facilities previously destroyed in Luni, Putwal, Tipu Post, Jamil Post, Umranwali, Chaprar Forward, Chhota Chak, and Janglora have been reconstructed with fewer than 100 terrorists in each, dispersing training infrastructure to minimise risk, they said.

Groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed, Hizbul Mujahideen, and The Resistance Front continue to exploit these launchpads to infiltrate J&K and carry out terror activities. Security sources say the camps have full backing from the Pakistani military, ISI, and government, underscoring Islamabad's role in sustaining cross-border terrorism.

IG Border Security Force (BSF), Shashank Anand, said, "After Operation Sindoor, we have accelerated the use of modern technology, including drones and artificial intelligence. We closely monitor all activity and coordinate with other agencies whenever suspicious movement is detected."

'Temporary setbacks'

"The insurgency has evolved over decades, and so has the support infrastructure across the border," said a retired army official. "Operations like Sindoor deliver temporary setbacks, but the rebuilding effort shows that terror networks continue to pose a serious threat."

With dense forests, rugged terrain, and winter-season infiltration routes, security forces remain on high alert, combining traditional patrolling with technology-driven surveillance to prevent cross-border terrorism.

UP horror: Minors kill teacher's wife and children over corporal punishment

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

In a chilling act of retaliation, two minors allegedly hacked to death the wife and two children of their teacher in Uttar Pradesh's Baghpat district, reportedly enraged over corporal punishment.

The incident occurred on Saturday afternoon inside the victims' rented house located within a mosque complex in Gangnauli. The accused allegedly barged into the house and murdered their teacher Mufti Ibrahim's wife, Israna, and their two daughters, Sofia and Sumaiya, aged five and two, respectively. Israna was reportedly five months pregnant.

Ibrahim was away at the time of the attack.

"The accused, both minors, have been arrested and the murder weapons recovered," said a senior police official in Baghpat.

Sources said that Ibrahim, a religious teacher, taught children in the locality. The accused were among his students and lived in the same neighbourhood.

Ibrahim was known to discipline students with sticks, which the duo resented. On Saturday, they allegedly procured a hammer and a knife and attacked his wife, striking her repeatedly and killing her on the spot. They then turned on the two children.

The killings sparked outrage among villagers, leading to a scuffle with the police. Officers used force to disperse the agitated crowd.

MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie

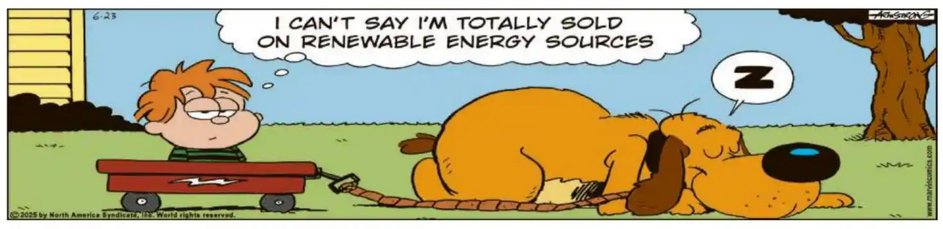
BOY, THERE'S NOTHING TO WATCH ON TV
I'M SORRY, HONEY
MAYBE THIS WOULD BE A GOOD TIME TO CLEAN OUT THE GARAGE
LISTEN TO THIS, HONEY! A NEW SHOW ABOUT THE MOLECULAR STRUCTURE OF SEAWEED! I THINK I'LL CHECK IT OUT!

Hagar The Horrible

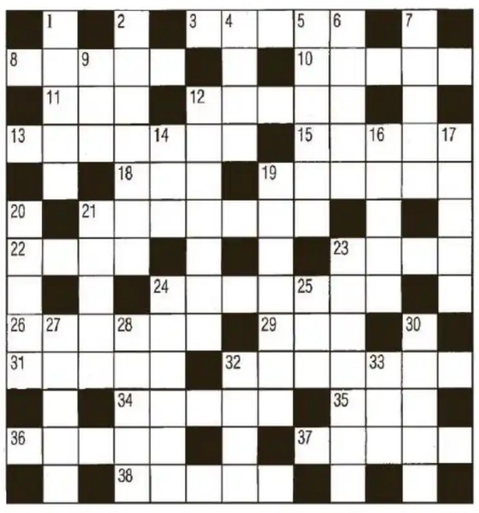
Beetle Bailey

Peanuts

Marvin



CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12265



CRYPTIC

ACROSS
3 Blows, like bobbies getting out of breath! (5)
8 Half hour stoppage in town (5)
10 The way Les loses heart and cries (5)
11 In truth, the depression is lengthy! (3)
12 Not a bareheaded bird? (5)
13 Get clean away with a failure (7)
15 He turns in with an injured leg (5)
18 It has its heroes - and some cowards (3)
19 Trot out (6)
21 Guarded against the usual dire disorder (7)
22 Left the bad guy out for being nasty (4)
23 Down from university? (4)
24 Vendors named Peter? (7)
26 Presented on boards! (6)
29 A corps is a unit (3)
31 Hiss the slackers who won't make a straightforward move (5)
32 A fence I mended for a partner (7)
34 State you need a bit of a back massage (5)
35 A useless palindrome (3)
36 Her asset has been liquidated (5)
37 Tough old sea captain (5)
38 Come up very nicely (5)

DOWN
1 Arrange to provide fish at the farm centre (5)
2 Pay what may be provided for a walk-over (7)
4 Anger created by arson? (4)
5 Called a person when the doctor was out (6)
6 The junior, I see, is sound (5)
7 Group of buses only a short distance round the corner? (5)
9 Carrier of half a bushel (3)
12 Cooked in a way that found favour? (7)
14 A sweep, for instance, with love and a warm heart (3)
16 Noteworthy, they were made to love and kiss (5)
17 Flatten down (and put up again?) (5)
19 Recover by a sort of miracle (7)
20 Suppose a guest comes to a different conclusion (5)
21 Call urgently for piano wire (5)
23 One man's name for a gun? (7)
24 Cause of some childhood ups and downs (6)
25 Are over age (3)
27 Connects about 50 slabs (5)
28 Grand girl, typically transparent (5)
30 Theodore's childhood playmate? (5)
32 Alf, straying out of line, will not succeed (4)
33 Dog treated remedially by Ed (3)

ACROSS
3 Types (5)
8 Good-looking (5)
10 Eagle's nest (5)
11 Perish (3)
12 Bet (5)
13 Sunshade (7)
15 Coordinate (3,2)
18 Hill (3)
19 Opportunity (6)
21 Blunt or curt (7)
22 Gratis (4)
23 Curve (4)
24 Smoker's device (7)
26 Slumbering (6)
29 Charged particle (3)
31 Ogles (5)
32 Still (7)
34 Pallid (5)
35 Afflict (3)
36 Human trunk (5)
37 Thieve (5)
38 Relish (5)

DOWN
1 Legendary king (5)
2 Playhouse (7)
4 Spoken (4)
5 Cut a tooth (6)
6 Country (5)
7 To ape (5)
9 Teacher's title (3)
12 Revere (7)
14 Former French coin (3)
16 Go in (5)
17 Poor (5)
19 Pillow (7)
20 Liver, kidney, etc, (5)
21 Beautiful girl (5)
23 Below (7)
24 Class (6)
25 Haul (3)
27 Spanish man (5)
28 Rub out (5)
30 Unwind (5)
32 Brave man (4)
33 Contend (3)

SOLUTIONS TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD 2649

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 1 Rotate, 4 Evacuate, 9 Python, 10 On demand, 12 Amethyst, 13 Orator, 15 Loot, 16 Turn turtle, 19 Red herring, 20 Stem, 23 Submit, 25 Studious, 27 On the sly, 28 Subtle, 29 Dressing, 30 Gently.

DOWN: 1 Raphael, 2 To the good, 3 Trophy, 5 Vine, 6 Clear-cut, 7 Await, 8 Endorse, 11 Estuary, 14 Inanity, 17 Tit for tat, 18 Get ideas, 19 Respond, 21 Mystery, 22 Adduce, 24 Bathe, 26 Plan.

◆SU-DO-KU-6724◆

	6							4
2		5	6			8		
		9		1	7			
				5	2	9		
8		1				2		5
		4	9	7				
			3	8		6		
		3			9	4		2
6							3	

very hard

SOLUTION TO 6723

5	1	9	4	7	3	8	2	6
3	6	7	1	8	2	9	5	4
2	8	4	9	5	6	7	1	3
6	5	8	3	4	1	2	7	9
1	7	2	6	9	8	4	3	5
4	9	3	5	2	7	1	6	8
8	2	6	7	3	9	5	4	1
7	3	5	8	1	4	6	9	2
9	4	1	2	6	5	3	8	7

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

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							RACK 1
C3	E1	A1	S1	V4	S1	R1	
							RACK 2
L1	S1	R1	I1	L1	I1	H4	
							RACK 3
K5	M3	A1	L1	I1	N1	M3	
							RACK 4
O1	O1	W4	N1	G2	S1	R1	

PAR SCORE 95-105
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

SATURDAY'S SOLUTION

M3	I1	D2	W4	I1	F4	E1	RACK 1 =	74
K5	N1	O1	W4	I1	N1	G2	RACK 2 =	95
A1	S1	P3	I1	R1	E1	D2	RACK 3 =	80
P3	O1	L1	I1	T1	I1	C3	RACK 4 =	83
							JUDD'S TOTAL	332

PAR SCORE 215-225

JUMBLE®

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

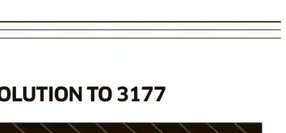
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SIBSL

LKUCC

SISUQH

DEUSND


It's amazing that Homer wrote about this sport in the Iliad and the Odyssey.
It was part of the ancient Olympic Games.
IF YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT A CERTAIN TRACK-AND-FIELD EVENT, THEN YOU CAN ---

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: HANDY ANNUL PEOPLE HOOPLA
Answer: The first positive number really liked its alone time when it could be the — ONE AND ONLY

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HITORI-3178

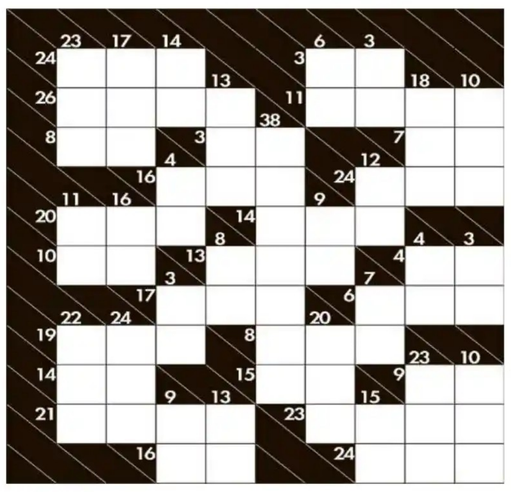
3	5	6	8	3	8	3	7
4	7	7	8	2	1	3	1
8	1	4	1	8	3	2	8
1	3	2	6	5	4	7	2
3	2	5	4	1	7	8	3
5	7	7	8	8	8	1	8
2	4	3	5	8	1	8	6
7	3	1	3	4	2	6	2

SOLUTION TO 3177

4	■	8	■	6	1	5	7
6	1	5	7	3	■	2	■
■	5	■	1	■	6	8	3
8	2	7	■	5	3	■	1
1	3	■	5	2	■	6	■
■	8	6	■	4	7	1	5
5	4	3	6	■	8	7	■
■	6	2	■	7	4	3	8

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

KAKURO- 3178



SOLUTION TO 3177

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3704

■	9	6						■
	■						4	1
3		■				■	2	
1			3		■	7		
				9				5
	7	9	■	5	■	4		
	4	■	2			8	9	
	■			7		6	■	
■					4			7

SOLUTION TO 3703

1	7	2	3	6	4	9	8	5
8	6	4	5	9	7	2	1	3
9	3	5	1	2	8	7	4	6
3	5	9	7	1	6	4	2	8
6	2	1	8	4	5	3	9	7
7	4	8	9	3	2	6	5	1
5	9	3	2	7	1	8	6	4
4	8	7	6	5	9	1	3	2
2	1	6	4	8	3	5	7	9

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

Trump heads to Israel, Egypt as Gaza truce takes effect

Jerusalem expects hostage release to begin today

CAIRO/JERUSALEM, REUTERS

A ceasefire between Israel and Hamas held in Gaza for a third day on Sunday ahead of the expected release of Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners and an address by US President Donald Trump to Israel's parliament.

Thousands of Palestinians continued to travel north towards Gaza City, the focus of Israeli attacks over the past two months, hopeful the ceasefire would bring an end to the war.

"There is a lot of joy among the people," said Abdou Abu Seada, adding that the joy was tempered by exhaustion after two years of war that has destroyed much of Gaza.

Government spokesperson Shosh Bedrosian said that Israel expected the hostages to start being released early Monday morning with the 20 living hostages to be released together.

Under the ceasefire agreement, Hamas is due by noon on Monday to release the remaining hostages, taken captive on October 7, 2023, when the group's militants launched the surprise attack on Israel that ignited the war.

Trump is due to arrive in Israel on Monday to address the Knesset, the parliament, before traveling to Sharm El Sheikh in Egypt for a world leaders' summit on ending the Gaza war.

No Israeli officials at peace summit

Israel will not send a representative to the peace summit for Gaza that will be hosted by US President Donald Trump and his Egyptian counterpart Abdel Fattah al-Sisi on Monday in Sharm el-Sheikh. "No Israeli official will attend," Shosh Bedrosian, a spokeswoman for Israeli Prime Minister said.

'Palestinian prisoners to be freed after Israeli hostages'

Israel will begin releasing Palestinian prisoners once it has confirmation that all hostages held in Gaza have arrived in the country, a spokeswoman for the prime minister said Sunday. Under the terms of the plan, Hamas is to release by Monday noon.

EU's new digital border registration kicks in for all visitors

'Must do everything to prevent ultras, irregular migrants'

LONDON, PTI

Travellers to Europe, including Indians, will be subject to new entry registrations from Sunday under a phased implementation of the European Union's new digital border system.

The EU's Entry Exit System (EES) requires non-EU citizens to register at the border when entering any of the EU countries by scanning their passport and having their fingerprints and photograph taken.

EES will be a requirement when entering Schengen area countries including Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland, with Ireland and Cyprus exempt. For travellers using the Port of Dover, Eurotunnel at Folkestone or Eurostar at St Pancras International in London, the process will take place at the border before they leave the UK.

"We must do everything we can to prevent terrorists and irregular migrants from entering the Schengen Area illegally," said Rasmus Stoklund, EU's Minister for Immigration and Integration.

"It is crucial that we maintain effective control over third-country nationals entering the Schengen Area, so that we can strengthen security at the external borders. With an EU-wide IT system, it will become easier to monitor who is crossing our borders," he said.

Travellers do not need to take any action before travelling and the process is free as registration takes place upon arrival at the EU border, making the border process longer than previous border checks.

"We recognise that EES checks will be a significant change for British travellers, which is why we have worked closely with our European partners to ensure the rollout goes as smoothly as possible," said Alex Norris, UK Minister for Border Security and Asylum.

China vows to stand firm against Trump's 100% tariff threat

BEIJING, AP: China signalled on Sunday that it would not back down in the face of a 100 per cent tariff threat from President Donald Trump, urging the US to resolve differences through negotiations instead of threats.

"China's stance is consistent," the Commerce Ministry said in a statement posted online. "We do not want a tariff war but we are not afraid of one."

The response came two days after Trump threatened to jack up the tax on imports from China by November 1 in response to new Chinese restrictions on the export of rare earths, a key ingredient for many consumer and military products.

The back and forth threatens to derail a possible meeting between Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping and end a truce in a tariff war in which new tariffs from both sides briefly topped 100 per cent in April.

Trump has raised taxes on imports from many US trading partners this year, seeking to win concessions in return for tariff reductions.

WORLD AT A GLANCE

Cameroonian President Paul Biya, 92, who is seeking an eighth term, casts his ballot while his wife Chantal watches during the presidential election in Yaounde, Cameroon, on Sunday. REUTERS

US intelligence helps Ukraine target Russian energy infra: FT

▶ The US has been helping Ukraine mount long-range strikes on Russian energy facilities for months in a joint effort to weaken the economy and force President Vladimir Putin to the negotiating table, the Financial Times reported on Sunday, reports Reuters.

US intelligence has helped Kyiv strike important Russian energy assets, including oil refineries, far beyond the front line, the newspaper said, citing unnamed Ukrainian and US officials familiar with the campaign.

The White House, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's office and Ukraine's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to Reuters requests for comment. There was no immediate comment from the Russian foreign ministry.

Moscow said this month that Washington and its Nato alliance were regularly supplying intelligence to Kyiv in the war Putin launched in February 2022.

"The supply and use of the entire infrastructure of Nato and the United States to collect and transfer intelligence to Ukrainians is obvious," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters then.

16 dead after blast at US factory

▶ A huge blast at an explosives factory in Tennessee killed 16 people, authorities said Saturday, lowering the toll after locating two people who were previously missing and presumed dead, reports AFP from Washington.

The explosion Friday in the town of Bucksnort took place at a factory owned by Accurate Energetic Systems, which makes explosives for both military and demolition purposes.

The blast destroyed an entire building at the plant's large campus, shook homes miles away and sent debris flying, news reports said.

After initially reporting a toll of 18 people presumed dead, "we have been able to locate and determine the two other folks (were) not on the site," Humphreys County Sheriff Chris Davis said.

Madagascar army unit claims control as prez alleges power grab

ANTANANARIVO, AFP: A mutinied army unit declared Sunday that it was taking control of all Madagascar military forces as President Andry Rajoelina said an "attempt to seize power illegally" was underway.

The CAPSAT contingent of administrative and technical officers joined thousands of protesters in the city centre on Saturday in a major shift in a more than two-week anti-government protest movement.

The unit had earlier declared that it would "refuse orders to shoot" and criticised the gendarmerie, who have been accused of using heavy-handed tactics against protesters, causing several deaths.

"From now on, all orders of the Malagasy army -- whether land, air or the army -- will originate from CAPSAT headquarters," officers of the CAPSAT contingent of administrative and technical officers claimed in a video statement.

There was no immediate response from other units or the military command.

Oscar-winning actor Diane Keaton dies at 79

LOS ANGELES, AFP

Actress Diane Keaton, known for her Oscar-winning performance in 1977's "Annie Hall" and her role in "The Godfather" films, has died at age 79.

Details were not immediately available and Keaton's loved ones have asked for privacy, a family spokesperson told People, which said the actress died Saturday in California.

Keaton was a frequent collaborator of director Woody Allen, portraying the titular character in "Annie Hall," the charming girlfriend of Allen's comic

Actress Diane Keaton holds Golden Globe Award. REUTERS FILE

Alvy Singer. The film also garnered Oscars for best picture, best director and best original screenplay, cementing Keaton's place as one of the industry's top actresses.

The actress made her mark co-starring in eight Allen movies, from "Play It Again, Sam" (1972) to "Manhattan" (1979) and "Manhattan Murder Mystery" (1993).

In "The Godfather" films, she played Kay Adams, the girlfriend and eventual wife of Al Pacino's Michael Corleone. Apart from the Allen cannon, fans adored her portrayal as Steve Martin's wife in 1991 comedy "Father of the Bride," as the nervous and doting couple plan an extravagant wedding for their daughter.

Late in her career, Keaton starred in two movies about aging women: "Book Club" (2018), with its message that love has no age, and "Poms" (2019), the story of a terminally ill woman who moves to a retirement community to die, but winds up forming a cheerleading squad.

A BAFTA and Golden Globe winner, Keaton scored Oscar nominations three other times for best actress, for "Reds," "Marvin's Room" and "Something's Gotta Give."

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, home of the Oscars, said in a tribute to Keaton: "Some actors play emotions. Diane Keaton lived inside them."

Zacharias wins main event

PUNE RESULTS

Pesi Shroff-trained Zacharias, ridden by G Vivek, won the Villoo C Poonawalla Pune Derby, the feature event of the races on Sunday.

1. Commander Trophy - 1400M: Opus Dei (C Umesh) 1; Scaramouche (TS Jodha) 2; Liam (A Omlarl) 3; Eagle Day (Sonu Chouhan) 4; Wb: 3/4, 1-1/4, 1-3/4L. T: 1:27.18. TB: Imtiaz Sait. Fav: Scaramouche.

2. Jayant M Shah & Champak M Shah Gold Trophy -2400M: Endurance (CS Jodha) 1; Land Of Plenty (Ramswarup) 2; Looking Like A Wow (Antony Raj) 3; Viking (Trevor Patel) 4; Wb: 2-1/4, 2L, Lnk. T: 2:34.08. TB: Imtiaz Sait. Fav: Endurance.

3. Pune Police Commissioners Trophy - 1200M: Joondalup (C Umesh) 1; Cindrella's Dreamc (Aditya Waydande) 2; Starseed (TS Jodha) 3; Majestic Warriro (Mustakim Alam) 4; Wb: 2-1/4, 1/2, 1-1/4L. T: 1:08.51. TB: James Mckewon. Fav: Escape Velocity.

4. Jimmy Umrigar Trophy (Div I) - 1400M: Alfonsine (Sai Kiran) 1; Exciting (G Vivek) 2; Caradoc (Trevor Patel) 3; Skandha (TS Jodha) 4; NR: Bravo Zulu, Semurg & Gold Bar. Wb: 3-1/2, 2-1/4, 5-3/4L. 1:25.07. TB: Prasanna Kumar. Fav: Alfonsine.

5. Noshir & Dolly Sprint Million - 1200M: Shambala (Antony Raj) 1; Magileto (Trevor Patel) 2; Christophany (Neeraj Rawal) 3; Dubai Princess (Nazil) 4; Wb: Nk, 3, 3/4L. T: 1:06.94. TB: Miss Nazak Chenoy. Fav: Shamala.

6. Villoo C Poonawalla Pune Derby - 2000M: Zacharias (G Vivek) 1; Gun Smoke (Yash Narredu) 2; Superstar (A Prakash) 3; Baychimo (Antony Raj) 4; Wb: 5-1/2L, Lnk, Snk. T: 2:02.13. TB: Pesi Shroff. Fav: Prokofiev.

7. Jimmy Umrigar Trophy (Div II) - 1400M: Conjurer (Antony Raj) 1; Claude (Sandesh) 2; Her Charge (TS Jodha) 3; Namiri (Trevor Patel) 4; Wb: 1-1/4, 3, 3L. T: 1:25.15. TB: Prithviraj. Fav: Conjurer.

8. Vinayak Salver - 1000M: Flashman (Antony Raj) 1; Samson (Mustakim Alam) 2; We Still Believe (Pranil) 3; Arbitrage (Haridas Gore) 4; Wb: Lnk, 1-1/4, 3/4L. T: 0:57.94. TB: Bezan Chenoy. Fav: Flashman.

Bengaluru dividends

I race: Rs 52w; 19, 12p; Fc: Rs 95; Q: Rs 32; Shp: Rs 29; Thp: Rs 56; Tri: Rs 548 & 751; Ex: Rs 1,524 & 343.
II race: Rs 26w; Rs 16, 27p; Fc: Rs 168; Q: Rs 127; Shp: Rs 49; Thp: Rs 36; Tri: Rs 652 & 227; Ex: Rs 1,259 & 285.
III race: Rs 124w; 24, 15, 71p; Fc: Rs 618; Q: Rs 246; Shp: Rs 35; Thp: Rs 149; Tri: Rs 10,484 & 5,990; Ex: Rs 1,54,747 & 66, 320.
IV race: Rs 14w; 10, 10, 10p; Fc: Rs 53; Q: Rs 33; Shp: Rs 24; Thp: Rs 29; Tri: Rs 46 & 10: Ex: Rs 69 & 62.
V race: Rs 14w; 11, 12, 15p; Fc: Rs 28; Q: Rs 21; Shp: Rs 25; Thp: Rs 36; Tri: Rs 96 & 84; Ex: Rs 381 & 183.
VI race: Rs 35w; 12, 20, 37p; Fc: Rs 350; Q: Rs 236; Shp: Rs 55; Thp: Rs 81; Tri: Rs 5,334 & 2,286; Ex: Rs 84,581 & 12,083.
VII race: Rs 15w; 10, 12, 23p; Fc: Rs 28; Q: Rs 27; Shp: Rs 22; Thp: Rs 47; Tri: Rs 175 & 101 Ex: Rs 375 & 125.
VIII race: Rs 28w; 14, 35, 30p; Fc: Rs 538; Q: Rs 197; Shp: Rs 85; Thp: Rs 71; Tri: Rs 2,895 & 1,396; Ex: Rs 12,710 & 4,357. **Jackpot:** Rs 777 (1215). **Runner-up:** Rs 78 (5202). **I treble:** Rs 8,410 (1). **II treble:** Rs 119 (88).

CRICKET SECOND TEST

West Indies fight from follow-on

Kuldeep spins a five-for as India stay 97 ahead after day 3

SIDNEY KIRAN
NEW DELHI, DHNS

For a second successive day, skipper Shubman Gill and the Indian team management took an extremely daring call that many in the past would have refrained from. Despite the bowlers sending down 81.5 overs across two hot days here, the Indians enforced the follow-on, confident that they could send the beleaguered West Indies crashing and burning in quick time again.

Although Indian bowlers were breathing fire, especially left-arm wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav who bagged 5/82 that saw the West Indies being bundled out for 248 in the first innings, the decision to ask the visitors to take strike again carried it's own share of risks. This despite India taking a lead of 270 runs and the West Indies not lasting more than three days in the previous five Tests between the two sides.

What if the West Indies batters, despite going through an atrocious run this year, put up a fight from nowhere? What if the slow and flat pitch at the Arun Jaitley Stadium doesn't really disintegrate as intended and offer help for the spinners? Will fatigue creep into the bowlers? To Gill and the management's dismay, that's exactly what happened as John Campbell (87 n.o., 145b) and Shai Hope (66 n.o., 103b) forged a superb 138-run partnership to take the hosts to 173/2 and push the second Test into a fourth day that's pregnant with possibilities now.

When the West Indies resumed their second innings around 50 minutes after lunch, India looked on course for a walk in the park. Opener Tagenarine Chanderpaul's attempted hook off Mohammed Siraj in the ninth over backfired as Gill completed a superb catch at midwicket while Washington Sundar castled Alick Athanaze right on the stroke of tea to leave the West Indies reeling at 35/2. The Indians were right on the money right after tea too, with Sundar bowling a beautiful spell where he elicited three leg-before appeals off Campbell. The left-hander, however, survived all of it with the rub of the green going his way twice when India reviewed. It was testing times, but Campbell showed heart and courage that skipper Roston Chase and head coach Daren Sammy had been demanding from the team.

Right then is when Campbell decided to flip the switch after realising pure defence wasn't going to help much. He switched to T20 mode, constantly pulling off one big shot after another to throw the trio of Indian spinners — Ravindra Jadeja, Sundar and Kuldeep — completely off guard. If they pitched full, he spanked them down the ground or employed the sweep shot — all with brute force. And if it was short, he would rock back and cut them or slap them through covers.

Campbell's audacity rubbed off on Hope as well. He wasn't that aggressive, but whenever the ball was there to be hit, he didn't miss out on the opportunity. Such was the speed of scoring from the duo, the West Indies motored on at almost six runs an over during the early part of their partnership.

With the pitch offering not much help and the spinners looking lost for ideas, Gill was forced to spread the field. It was the first time in the series the Indians were under the pump. It was exactly what Campbell and Hope wanted, and they showed maturity to further frustrate the hosts. They cut down the high-risk shots, just played good old-fashioned percentage cricket, picking singles and odd boundaries dictated play. They, however, know the job isn't completely done as India are still ahead of the eight-ball. Earlier though, Kuldeep yet again showed why he's one of the best spinners in the world and ready to fit into the shoes vacated by off-spinner R Ashwin. A brilliant first spell of 10-0-27-3 broke the West Indies' middle order as they slumped to 217/8 at lunch after starting the day at 140/4. West Indies disintegrated after that before rising from the ashes later.

India's Kuldeep Yadav picked up a five-wicket haul during the third day of the second and last Test against West Indies at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi. AFP

SCOREBOARD

INDIA (I Innings): 518/5 decl
WEST INDIES (I Innings, O/n: 140/4):
Campbell c Sudharsan b Jadeja ... 10 (25b, 2x4)
Chanderpaul c Rahul b Jadeja 34 (67b, 4x4, 1x6)
Athanaze c Jadeja b Kuldeep 41 (84b, 5x4, 1x6)
Hope b Kuldeep 36 (57b, 5x4)
Chase c&b Jadeja 0 (7b)
Imlach lbw Kuldeep 21 (67b, 3x4)
Greaves lbw Kuldeep 17 (20b, 3x4)
Pierre b Bumrah 23 (46b, 3x4)
Warrican b Siraj 1 (5b)
Phillip (not out) 24 (93b, 2x4)
Seales lbw Kuldeep 13 (25b, 3x4)
Extras (B-5, LB-18, NB-5) 28
TOTAL (all out, 81.5 overs) 248
Fall of wickets: 1-21 (Campbell), 2-87 (Chanderpaul), 3-106 (Athanaze), 4-107 (Chase), 5-156 (Hope), 6-163 (Imlach), 7-174 (Greaves), 8-175 (Warrican), 9-221 (Pierre).
Bowling: Bumrah 14-4-40-1, Siraj 9-2-16-1, Jadeja 19-5-46-3 (nb-4), Kuldeep 26.5-4-82-5 (nb-1), Sundar 13-2-41-0.
WEST INDIES (II Innings, f/o):
Campbell (batting) 87 (145b, 9x4, 2x6)
Chanderpaul 10 (30b, 1x4)
Athanaze b Sundar 7 (17b)
Hope (batting) 66 (103b, 8x4, 2x6)
Extras (B-2, NB-1) 3
TOTAL (for 2 wkts, 49 overs) 173
Fall of wickets: 1-17 (Chanderpaul), 2-35 (Athanaze).
Bowling: Siraj 6-2-10-1, Jadeja 14-3-52-0 (nb-1), Sundar 13-3-44-1, Kuldeep 11-0-53-0, Bumrah 4-2-9-0, Jaiswal 1-0-3-0.

Doeschate explains India's gamble

SIDNEY KIRAN
NEW DELHI, DHNS

India's assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate **(in pic)** subtly hinted there could have been some misjudgement from the think-tank in enforcing the follow-on on a slow pitch at the Arun Jaitley Stadium here on Sunday that didn't deteriorate as intended.

After dismissing the West Indies for 248 an hour into the second session, the Indians asked the visitors to take strike again as they felt a lead of 270 would be good enough to lay siege on them. But John Campbell (87 not out) and Shai Hope (66 not out) staged a brilliant counterattack with an unbroken 138-run partnership to defy the Indians on a surface that remained flat and hardly offered any help for the spinners.

"There was a discussion to bat obviously," said Doeschate at a press conference on Sunday. "The last two wickets took a little bit longer than we hoped for. We thought 275 (270 actually) was a good lead. We thought the wicket is going to keep deteriorating. We thought the wicket will be at its worst at the close of play. It seems to have slowed down. It's quite challenging to get any pace on the wicket.

"We have to fire the ball and when you fire the ball in, there are fewer chances of spinning. So we will be back tomorrow, hopefully get four batters and into the tail. I don't think we were a million miles off this afternoon, not to point fingers at the umpire at all. There were three close decisions there. If two of those had gone our way, it would have been a much better day for us."

West Indies' spinner Khary Pierre admitted they too were surprised at the declaration, considering the Indians bowled 81.5 overs. "Actually, it was a bit surprising as the wicket was still a good one (for batting). But I wasn't surprised too because it's India and, you know, they didn't think we could bat this long. I know we still have to bat long and try and make a game out of it. Pierre said Campbell's and Hope's heroics have given them the much-needed confidence booster ahead of a make-or-break fourth day. "(Their partnership) gives us a lot of confidence. I think the two batsmen have laid a good platform for us. This is Test match cricket and the wicket is going to deteriorate more. The more runs we can pile on, it's going to be a challenge for the Indian batsmen."

Asbar-ridden Celestial for feature

HYDERABAD SELECTIONS

Celestial, trained by Lasman Singh and to be ridden by A Ashhad Asbar, will garner the maximum support in the Sikander E Azam Plate, the feature event of the races to be run over a mile on Monday. The first race will start at 1:20 pm.
1. Nizamabad Plate (Div III) - 1200M: Mexican Wave 1, Diligence 2, Faizah 3.
2. Nawab Mehdi Jung Bahadur Memorial Cup (Div II) - 1100M: Shadow Fax 1, Inderdhanush 2, Great Giver 3.
3. Nizamabad Plate (Div II) - 1200M: Dontblockmyway 1, Hoping Star 2, Peanut 3.
4. Nizamabad Plate (Div I) - 1200M: Tootsie Darling 1, Aquatone 2, Analysis 3.
5. Nawab Mehdi Jung Bahadur Memorial Cup (Div I) - 1100m: Top In Class 1, Federer 2, Coming Home 3.
6. Sikander E Azam Plate - 1600M: Celestial 1, Perception 2, Noble Heart 3.
7. Goodwood Plate - 1600M: Secret Option 1, Battle On 2, Hoping High 3.
Day's best: Tootsie Darling. **Jackpot:** 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. **I treble:** 2, 3, 4. **II treble:** 5, 6, 7.

Alex Matata (left) and Lilian Kasait Rengeruk.

Kenyans reign in Delhi Half Marathon

NEW DELHI, PTI: Kenyan long-distance runners Alex Matata and Lilian Kasait Rengeruk stamped their authority on the capital's streets, storming to victory in the men's and women's elite races respectively at the Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon here on Sunday.

Matata, who finished runner-up here last year, ran a perfectly-timed race to cross the line in 59:50 seconds, while Rengeruk triumphed in the women's field with a time of 1:07:20 seconds.

Top Indian finishers

Abhishek Pal and Seema were the fastest Indian finishers, clocking 1:04:17 and 1:11:23 seconds respectively as the country's top middle- and long-distance athlete Gulveer Singh pulled out due to a back injury he sustained on Thursday.

MNK Rao get the better of JSC

BENGALURU, DHNS: MNK Rao defeated JSC 80-70 in their last home match of the Karnataka 'A' Division League Basketball Championship at MNK Rao Park Basketball Courts in Basavanagudi here on Sunday.

LOCAL BASKETBALL

Results: Beagles BC lt to KSP (Walkover); DYES Bangalore: 75 (Adarsh 18, Srinivas 13) bt DK District: 63 (Suhas 21, Prastik 16); Bank of Baroda: 96 (Anil 28, Kartikeyan 13) bt Viveks: 58 (Ganesh 14, Preetham 11); MNK Rao: 80 (Ajin 25, Sidhanth 20) bt JSC: 70 (Sanketh 23, Rohit 18); Young Orions: 93 (Sujan 26, Shashank 17, Abhishek 16) bt Southern Blues: 64 (Venkat 13, Rohan 13).

IN BRIEF

Kaashvi finishes runner-up

▸ Karnataka's Kaashvi Venkat Konanki finished as runner-up to West Bengal's Priyansi Chatterjee (0-6, 2-6) in the AITA U-12 National Series tennis tournament, which concluded in Jaipur on Sunday, reports DHNS.

Result (final): Priyansi Chatterjee (WB) bt Kaashvi Venkat Konanki (Kar) 6-0, 6-2.

Indian colts down NZ

▸ The Indian junior men's hockey team continued its unbeaten run at the Sultan of Johor Cup with a comfortable 4-2 win against New Zealand, reports PTI from Johor, Malaysia.

Indian skeet shooters falter

▸ None of the Indian shooters could make the individual finals in either the men's or women's skeet events at the ISSF World Championship for Shotgun, reports PTI from Athens.

In the women's skeet, Raiza Dhillon was the best-placed Indian, finishing 16th among 58 shooters with a score of 116 out of 125, three points short of the cut-off mark of 119 required to make the six-shooter final.

Nadeem's coach banned

▸ Salman Iqbal, the long serving coach of Pakistan's top athlete Arshad Nadeem, was on Sunday banned for life by the country's Athletics Federation for violating the constitution of the Punjab Athletics Association, where he holds the position of President, reports PTI from Lahore.

CRICKET WOMEN'S ODI WORLD CUP

Ton-up Healy breaks India's resistance

Australia score 331 to script highest-ever chase in WODIs

VISAKHAPATNAM, PTI

Skipper Alyssa Healy unfurled a hundred touched with genius and grit as Australia achieved the highest-ever successful run chase in women's ODI to register a three-wicket win over India in their World Cup match here on Sunday.

Healy (142, 107 ball, 21x4, 3x6) toyed with the Indian bowlers as the seven-time champions ended up with 331 for seven, after the hosts garnered an impressive 330 riding on fifties by Smriti Mandhana and Pratika Rawal.

The previous highest successful run chase was Sri Lanka getting past 302 against South Africa in 2024.

The Australians went on top of the table with seven points, while India remained on third with four points.

Healy's batting was all about pristine ball hitting, a result of her wonderfully supple wrists, allowing the right-hander to place the ball precisely in the desired areas.

She had a rather subdued record against pacer Kranti Gaud before this game, but on this night, Healy biffed the Indian for a six and three fours in an over to break the stranglehold.

Sneh Rana generally tried the fuller lengths, trying to cramp Healy for room but the Australian was equal to the task and brought out sweeps to find the often vacant arc between square leg and mid wicket or behind the fine leg.

Rana tried to bowl at a faster click but Healy slog swept the off-spinner for a six as the Australians motored well along the required rate. Healy fetched her fifty in 35 balls — the fastest in this edition of the tournament. Amidst the Australian domination, left-arm spinner Sri Charani bowled an excellent spell (10-1-41-3) that gave India, who are without a sixth bowling option, a semblance of control in the middle overs.

The local girl grabbed the wickets of Phoebe Litchfield, who assisted Healy in a cavalier 85 runs stand for the opening wicket, and Annabel Sutherland, whom she foxed with a clever quicker, straight ball to castle. With veteran Ellyse Perry retiring hurt, Australia appeared to be in a tight spot and the required rate too went past seven for the first time during the chase. But Healy found a sensible partner in Ashleigh Gardner (45) as they added 95 runs for the fourth wicket to bring the Australians back into the match.

Captain Alyssa Healy scored a brilliant 142 to take Australia over the line against India in Visakhapatnam on Sunday. PTI

Healy then scripted her sixth WODI hundred, first as the captain of her country, with a single off Deepti Sharma, acknowledging the big moment with a simple wave of the bat.

Earlier, India woke up from their batting slumber through classy fifties by Mandhana and Rawal to post a 300-plus total.

Asked to bat first, India were served well by openers Mandhana (80, 66 balls) and Rawal (75, 96 balls) on a pitch that had little assistance for the Australian bowlers.

Smriti fastest to 5000

During the course of her innings, 29-year-old Mandhana also completed 5000 runs in WODIs, earning the distinction of being the fastest and youngest player to achieve the feat. She took 112 matches to get to the milestone mark.

Mandhana and Rawal also stitched together their sixth 100-run stand in 21 innings, now one shy of India's record of seven between Purnima Raut Mithali Raj (34 innings).

Brief scores: India: 330 all out in 48.5 overs (Pratika Rawal 75, Smriti Mandhana 80, Harleen Deol 38, Jemimah Rodrigues 33, Richa Ghosh 32; Sophie Molineux 3-75, Annabel Sutherland 5-40) lt to Australia: 331/7 in 49 overs (Alyssa Healy 142, Phoebe Litchfield 40, Ellyse Perry 47 n.o., Ashleigh Gardner 45; Amanjot Kaur 2-68, Shree Charani 3-41, Deepti Sharma 2-52). **PoM:** Alyssa Healy.
Today's match: South Africa vs Bangladesh.

Pakistan recover after Proteas fightback

LAHORE, AFP: Pakistan rode on a brilliant 93 from Imam-ul-Haq to reach 313-5 after a brief fightback from South Africa on the opening day of the first Test in Lahore on Sunday.

Shan Masood hit 76, but Haq missed out on his hundred as Pakistan slumped to 199-5 as four wickets fell quickly. Mohammad Rizwan, 62 not out, and Salman Agha, unbeaten 52 at the close, rebuilt the innings during an unbroken sixth-wicket stand of 114 in the final session on a spin-friendly Gaddafi Stadium pitch.

Rizwan hit two fours and two sixes in his 12th Test half-century while Agha had two fours and a six in reaching his 10th fifty. Pakistan dominated most of the first two sessions, but then had a mini-collapse from 163-1 to 199-5 as they lost four wickets for 36 runs, the last three without adding a run either side of the tea interval.

Spinner Prenelan Subrayen trapped Masood lbw for 76, including nine fours and a six, to end a 161-run stand with Haq.

Brief scores: Pakistan: 315/5 in 90 overs (Imam-ul-Haq 93, Shan Masood 76, Mohammad Rizwan 62 n.o., Salman Agha 52 n.o.; Senuran Muthusamy 2-101) vs South Africa.

Tanvi, Unnati to shoulder home hopes

GUWAHATI, PTI: Riding high on their historic bronze medal finish in the mixed team event, the Indian contingent will look to carry that momentum into the individual competitions of the BWF World Junior Championships that begin here on Monday.

India's best performance in the tournament came 17 years ago in Pune when Saina Nehwal grabbed the girls' singles gold while RMV Guru Sai Dutt clinched the bronze medal in boys' singles.

So far, India has won a total of 11 individual medals in the history of the competition, including four silver.

India's best chance to add another gold medal to their tally in this edition is the girls' singles with junior World No. 1 Tanvi Sharma and China Open quarterfinalist Unnati Hooda.

Both players have been placed in different halves of the draw, raising hopes of a possible all-Indian final.

Tanvi, the Asian U-19 bronze medallist, has a bye in the opening round and a potential quarterfinal clash against Indonesian seventh seed Thalita Wiryawan.

A family fairytale final

Vacherot wins battle of cousins in Shanghai to lift maiden ATP title

SHANGHAI, AFP

World No. 204 Valentin Vacherot on Sunday beat his cousin Arthur Rinderknech to win the Shanghai Masters.

Qualifier Vacherot, the lowest-ranked Masters 1000 finalist in history, won 4-6, 6-3, 6-3.

The all-family final between the 54th-ranked Frenchman Rinderknech and 204th-ranked Vacherot, from Monaco, is one of the tournament's unlikeliest endings to date -- the latter's coach and half-brother, Benjamin Balleret, described it as a "fairytale".

It was just the third ATP Masters 1000 final in history to feature two unseeded players.

Elder cousin Rinderknech went ahead first, breaking with a backhand in the third game after three unforced errors from Vacherot.

That was enough for the 30-year-old to claim the set in an otherwise well-matched duel.

France's World No. 204 Valentin Vacherot (right) defeated his cousin and World No. 54 Arthur Rinderknech in the final to win the Shanghai Masters on Sunday. REUTERS

Gauff wins Wuhan Open

Coco Gauff overcame Jessica Pegula 6-4, 7-5 to clinch the third WTA 1000 title of her career in an all-American final at the Wuhan Open.

The third-seeded Gauff secured the trophy without dropping a set after a 1hr 42min battle in the central Chinese city.

In the first final between the former doubles partners, Gauff erased multiple deficits in the second set to improve her head-to-head record against Pegula to 3-4.

The 21-year-old in the process became the first player in the Open Era to win her first nine hard-court finals.

The pair had contrasting routes to the final with Gauff breezing dropping a mere 16 games while Pegula battled through three-setters in all eight of her previous matches.

Gauff won the first six points of the match and it set the tone for what was to come.

Joshna enters Japan Open semifinals

NEW DELHI, PTI: Seasoned Indian squash player Joshna Chinappa defeated Egyptian Nardine Garas in straight games to storm into the semifinals of the Japan Open PSA Challenger event in Yokohama, Japan.

The 39-year-old former women's World No. 10 beat Egyptian second seed Garas 11-8, 15-13, 11-9 in the quarterfinals on Saturday.

Joshna will now take on fourth seed Egyptian Rana Ismail in the last-four stage.

Abhay wins opener

India's Abhay Singh made a winning start at the Silicon Valley Open squash but his compatriots Velavan Senthilkumar and Ramit Tandon lost their opening matches at the PSA Gold event in Redwood City, USA.

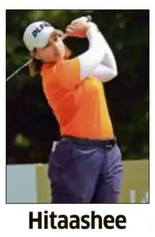
World No. 29 Abhay beat Karim El Hammamy of Egypt 12-10, 11-7, 13-11, and will meet French World No. 9 and fifth seed Victor Crouin in the second round of the USD 130,500 tournament.

Senthilkumar lost to Egypt's Kareem El Torkey 3-11, 5-11, 9-11, while Tandon went down to Hungary's Balazs Farkas in a five games.

Tan scores sensational win as three Indians finish in top-5

GURUGRAM, DHNS: Trailing by seven shots at the start of the final day, Singapore's Shannon Tan produced the best card of the day to win the Women's Indian Open in a sensational finish here on Sunday.

Shannon shot 67 in the 4th round and totalled 7-under 281, while Alice Hewson dropped a disastrous double bogey on the 72nd hole to come down from one ahead to one behind and finish in second place here at DLF Golf and Country Club. India's best hope, Hitaashee Bakshi, began the day at 9-under and three clear of the field and reached 10-under with a birdie in the second. She collapsed in a manner of speaking to end her final round at four-over 76 to finish in third spot. Pranavi Urs (72) was fourth, while Avani Prashanth (71) and Kelsey Bennett (71) were tied for fifth.



Hitaashee

Final scores (after 72 holes): Shannon Tan (Sin, 68-73-73-67); **282:** Alice Hewson (Eng, 69-72-69-72); **283:** Hitaashee Bakshi (Ind, 70-67-70-76); **284:** Pranavi Urs (Ind, 72-67-73-72); **285:** Kelsey Bennett (Aus, 71-71-72-71), Avani Prashanth (Ind, 73-71-70-71).

AIFF adopts SC-approved constitution

NEW DELHI, PTI: The All India Football Federation (AIFF) on Sunday adopted its Supreme Court-approved constitution at its Special General Body Meeting but left out two contentious clauses "pending directions from the Apex court".

The SC had on September 19 approved the draft constitution of the AIFF prepared by former apex court judge L Nageswara Rao with certain modifications, and directed the federation to adopt it within four weeks.

Two clauses of the draft constitution -- one relating to requirement of SC nod for amendment and another prohibiting office-bearers from holding dual posts in the AIFF and state units -- had caused headache to the top brass.

Karnataka boys clinch relay gold; girls take home silver

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnataka sprinters continued their fine show with U-20 boys grabbing the 4x100m relay gold, while the girls' relay team bagged silver at the National Junior Athletics Championships in Bhubaneswar on Sunday.

Sandesh Kambali, Sarvajeeth, Ayush Devadiga and Prateek D combined to clock 41.71 seconds and edged Tamil Nadu (41.73) and Punjab (41.75). The Karnataka girls sprinters clinched silver in U-20 4x100m and U-16 1000m sprint medley relays respectively. In the medley relay, the quartet of Neelamma M, Nupura Holla, Ranjitha K and Shamathmika Jois finished behind Maharashtra.

Results: Boys: U-20: 4x100m relay: Karnataka 41.71s, 1; Tamil Nadu 41.73, 2; Punjab 41.76, 3.
U-18: Long jump: Shivam Yadav (UP) 7.34m, 1; Deepak Munda (Jha) 7.23, 2; Manvith N (Kar) 7.18, 3.
Girls: U-20: 4x100m relay: Maharashtra 47.72s, 1; Karnataka 47.75, 2; Kerala 49.47, 3;
U-16: 1000m sprint medley relay: Maharashtra 2:17.36s, 1; Karnataka 2:19.43, 2; Kerala 2:22.92, 3.

Karnataka's sprint relay teams, along with their coaches, pose with their medals at the Kalinga Stadium on Sunday.

Hong Kong sweep India 3-0

BHUBANESHWAR, PTI: India's men's table tennis team suffered a one-sided 0-3 defeat against Hong Kong in the quarterfinals of the 28th ITTF-ATTU Asian Team Table Tennis Championships, here on Sunday.

Despite India's higher world ranking at No 4, Hong Kong, ranked sixth, displayed superior composure, tactical awareness, and discipline to claim a comfortable victory.

India, bronze medallists in the last three editions, struggled to mount any sustained challenge. Korea will now face India in the classification round for fifth place.

Wong Chun Ting, ranked 48th globally, set the tone by defeating India's left-hander Manush Shah 11-5 11-9 13-11.

India's foreign expert Massimo Costantini lauded Hong Kong's composure and noted that the young Indian would learn.

Haaland's 'trick for Norway

PARIS, AFP

Erling Haaland scored a hat-trick to pass 50 international goals in record time as Norway cruised to a 5-0 thrashing of Israel on Saturday, edging closer to qualifying for a first World Cup finals since 1998.

Before the match in Oslo, hundreds of people attended a pro-Palestinian demonstration, chanting "Free Palestine" to protest against Israel's "genocide" in Gaza, AFP journalists reported.

Norwegian police dispersed a gathering of pro-Palestinian activists with tear gas and made several arrests.

Norway now lead Group I with 18 points, six more than second-placed Italy, who beat Estonia 3-1 in Tallinn to stay on track for qualification.

The comfortable win in Oslo leaves Norway firmly in control of the group as they seek a place at next year's finals in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Erling Haaland celebrates scoring Norway's second goal during their 5-0 thrashing of Israel in Oslo. REUTERS

Ronaldo misses spot-kick

In Lisbon, Cristiano Ronaldo had a second-half penalty saved by the legs of Republic of Ireland goalkeeper Caoimhim Kelleher but Portugal stole the win in injury time when Ruben Neves scored with a header.

The hard-fought 1-0 win puts the Portuguese five points clear of Hungary at the top of Group F.

Results: Spain: 2 (Pino 24th, Oyarzabal 64th) bt Georgia: 0; Bulgaria: 1 (Kirilov 13th) lt to Turkey: 6 (Guler 11th, Popov 49th OG, Kenan Yildiz 52nd, 56th, Zeki Celik 65th, Irfan Can Kahveci 90th+3); Hungary: 2 (Lukacs 56th, Gruber 90th+4) bt Armenia: 0; Portugal: 1 (Ruben Neves 90th+1) bt Republic of Ireland: 0; Norway: 5 (Khalaili 18th OG, Haaland 27th, 63rd, 72nd, Nachmias 28th OG) bt Israel: 0; Estonia: 1 (Sappinen 76th) lt to Italy: 3 (Kean 5th, Retegui 38th, Esposito 74th); Latvia: 2 (Zelenkovs 41st, Gutkovskis 55th) drew with Andorra: 2 (San Nicolas 33rd, Oliveira 78th); Serbia: 0 lt to Albania: 1 (Manaj 45th+1).

Kaavish, Kyra wear crowns

BENGALURU, DHNS: Seventh seed Kaavish Yadav scored an upset win over top seed Jashwanth Mahamkali while second seed Kyra Raina defeated Akshara Shrinidhi to be crowned the under-13 boys' and girls' singles champions respectively at the Yonex Sunrise All-India Sub-Junior (U-13) Ranking badminton tournament at the Karnataka Badminton Association here on Sunday.

Results (all finals, prefix denotes seedings): Under-13: Boys: Singles: 7-Kaavish Yadav bt 1-Jashwanth Mahamkali 15-21, 21-18, 21-16.
Doubles: 1-Pratham Vishal Raut/ Vivaan bt 6-Shivansh Pabbu/ Karthkeya Mahaarshi Talari 21-11, 15-21, 21-10.
Girls: Singles: 2-Kyra Raina bt Akshara Shrinidhi 21-15, 17-21, 21-15.
Doubles: 1-Anya Proddatur/ Kyra Raina bt Shaanvi PN/ Shambhavi Sharma 21-14, 21-14.

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET

2nd Test: India vs West Indies (day 4, 9:30 am). **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network.**

Women's World Cup: South Africa vs Bangladesh **(3 pm). LIVE** on **Star Sports Network.**

1st Test: Pakistan vs South Africa **(day 2, 10:30 am). LIVE** on **FanCode.**

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